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THE STUDY OF THE GOSPELS

BY

J. ARMITAGE ROBINSON, D.D.

DEAN OF WELLS

TENTH IMPRESSION

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PREFACE

This little book has grown out of a series of lectures, of which the first three were delivered from the pulpit of Westminster Abbey in Advent, 1900, and the remainder in the Divinity School at Cambridge in the following year. I have availed myself of the present opportunity to revise and supplement what I originally said, but I have been unwilling to abandon the easier style and more direct address which belong to the lecture as compared with the formal manual.

The method of the book is neither systematic nor controversial. My object has been to present in plain language such results of my own study as may serve as a guide to the studies of others. I specially hope to be of use to those whose sacred calling demands that they shall be perpetually reading and ex-

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pounding the Gospel, but who have neither the time nor the training needed for an independent study of the minuter details of criticism. Accordingly, if what I here offer is disappointing to the severer student, I must plead that I have had him only indirectly in view. I am aware that to him I shall often be raising questions, where to others I seem to be answering them. Yet I trust that he will feel that, if I have sometimes spoken with assurance where I could not present the whole of the evidence which convinced me, I have never sought to foreclose inquiry, but have always everywhere maintained the rights of a reverent criticism.

I am fully conscious of the insufficiency of what I have written, but I offer it in the hope that it will lead others to study the Gospel history with renewed care, and, in view of modern questionings, to tread where the ground is firmest.

J. A. R.

Westminster Abbey,
F. of St Peter, 1902.

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CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN, DATE, AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

CHRISTIANITY started upon her mission to the world with a book in her hand. That book was not the New Testament, or any part of it. Not a word of it had then been written, nor could it at that time have seemed likely that any new writings could ever stand on an equality with the sacred book, long before completed, which Christianity had inherited from Judaism. The scriptures to which the apostles appealed were the Old Testament scriptures. These held a unique position among the writings of the world. They contained the revelation of God to the chosen people of God, the revelation of His nature, and of His will for men. The apostles were taught by Christ that these scriptures pointed to Him as the fulfilment of their prophetic message; and thus on His authority they became the sacred book of the Christian Church.

Their dignity remained for a long time quite unapproachable. 'It is written,' and 'the scripture saith,' were the formulæ by which they were cited. How it ever became possible that any other writings should attain the same level, and be cited by the same formulæ of distinction and authority—in other words, how the canon of scripture could have become enlarged so as to include twenty-seven new books—is one of the most interesting problems of early Christian history.

There is no doubt that the process began with the Gospels, and with them primarily as containing the words of Christ. What the Lord had said was at least equally authoritative with the words of the Old Testament scriptures. Had He not used language which implied this in saying, 'It was said to them of old time . . . but I say unto you'? Accordingly, books which recorded utterances of the Lord, if they were accepted as genuine records, would soon win their way to a position of importance.

It is, however, to be noted that the writers of our Gospels appear to have no conception that they are adding new books to the Bible. Their motives are fairly obvious. One is recording,

apparently for the first time, the story of Christ's appearance in Galilee, His wonderful power, His unfailing sympathy, His freedom from conventional bondages, His popularity with the people, His rejection by their religious leaders, His crucifixion and His resurrection from the dead. He does not tell us why he took his pen in hand. That is St Mark's Gospel. Another is making a careful combination of other accounts already existing, and supplementing them from his own resources, and all the while labouring to shew by passages of the Old Testament the relation of Jesus to the past as the long-promised Messiah of the Jews. That is St Matthew's Gospel. A third, St Luke, has undertaken a historical narrative of Christian beginnings for the instruction of a prominent Gentile convert. This he expressly tells us; and his Gospel forms the first of two volumes of a treatise which is never brought to its formal close. The fourth evangelist is no mere recorder or historian, but an interpreter, who tells us how he sees the Christ-life as he looks back upon it across the spiritual experiences of half a century. He indeed, in his peculiar position, cannot have been quite unconscious that he was leaving

a permanent legacy of instruction to the Church.

These four were not the only records which found currency in early times. In an age of literary activity both among Jews and Greeks it would have been strange indeed if 'many' had not 'taken in hand to draw up a narrative' of those astonishing events. Some of these efforts quickly perished; some were used up by one or other of our evangelists, and thus were superseded. Others again were of later origin, and were not independent of our Gospels; but what new material they offered seemed to be untrustworthy and invented for a purpose. The fragments of them which have chanced to come down to us fully bear out the adverse judgment which the general mind of the Church passed on them.

These four survived because they were worthy to survive. One of them indeed was well-nigh lost, just because its material was to be found almost completely embodied in two of the others, which were written on a larger scale. It must have seemed small and thin, lacking in completeness, and practically unnecessary. It was so seldom transcribed that at one period there seems

to have been only one available copy of it, and that had lost its final leaf. All our copies of St Mark are descended from one which broke off abruptly in the middle of a sentence—'for they feared . . .' A new ending was written, perhaps early in the second century, but not all our manuscripts contain it: indeed, some of them have a much shorter ending, which has no better claim to be original. It is only in recent times that we have come to see how greatly we should have been losers if the whole book had perished. For centuries it was practically disregarded, and it was a long time before any one thought it worth while to write a commentary upon it. It is our own age, with its spirit of critical investigation, which has learned to thank the wonderful providence which preserved to us these priceless 'first impressions' of the life of Christ—the rugged phrases and the vivid touches which subsequent evangelists softened or removed.

While apostles lived and could still be appealed to, and while other eye-witnesses could tell stories of the first days, the written Gospels could not reach the supreme position which they afterwards attained, when they had come by lapse of time to be the securest existing

evidence of what Christ did and said. As the years passed their value steadily increased; and side by side with them were read again and again the letters which certain apostles had written to the churches. When the Christians assembled for the Eucharist, passages were read aloud from these writings as well as from the Old Testament. 'The Lord and the Apostles' —as represented by the Gospels and the Epistles —became the ultimate court of appeal. The Acts, from its close connection with the Third Gospel, and the Apocalypse as a prophetic work bearing the sanction of St John's name, shared in the rise of the Gospels and Epistles to exclusive reverence; while a certain number of other books, like the Epistle of Clement and the 'Shepherd' of Hermas, fought hard, but in vain, to be included in what finally became the canon of New Testament scriptures. Church decrees did not create the canon; they only registered at length the completion of the long process by which the instinct of the Church under the divine guidance had come to recognise certain books as the indispensable documents of the faith, and they decided for or against the few candidates whose claims were still in dispute.

We have thus very briefly indicated the way in which the common instinct of the Church recognised in the four Gospels indispensable documents of the Christian faith. But it needs to be perpetually repeated that our evidence of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and of the general aim and purport of His teaching, does not depend upon the Gospels alone. If there were no narratives which told the full story of the great events, we should still gather the most important facts from the references which St Paul makes to them in his letters, and from other early writings which were quite independent of our written Gospels. Even if our Lord, who so far as we know wrote nothing Himself, had charged His disciples also to commit nothing to writing, and if as a consequence there had never been any written New Testament at all, the main facts would still have been handed down from generation to generation in the Christian society, whose very life was bound up with them. These facts were necessarily taught to all candidates for baptism, and they were summed up from the earliest times in a baptismal creed. And indeed the one method by which our Lord expressly desired that He should be kept in remembrance

would by itself have handed down across the centuries, by a perpetually repeated act, the story of His death together with its amazing sequel. These great facts depend on no mere book-evidence. They are proclaimed to all the world by the continuous existence of a living society which is founded upon them.

The tradition of the Church is in itself irrefragable evidence; for no man can give a tenable explanation of the existence of the Church, if he denies that these facts were in the earliest times believed to have actually happened. And no man can explain why any particular celebration of the Eucharist takes place at all, if it be not because from the very beginning Christ was believed to have done a similar act on the evening before He was crucified. Each new celebration is thus a fresh link in the long unbroken chain which connects us with the days of Jesus Christ.

It is true that the Church's tradition might in details have become exceedingly obscure or sadly deficient, or gradually overlaid with pious imaginings, if no safeguard had been provided. The fact that this tradition was written down in great fulness so near to the date of the events is the safeguard which is required. For the

tradition is perpetually undergoing a process of correction by standard, as the Gospels are continually read as the supreme authorities for it. The first question, then, with which we shall deal is this: How soon was the tradition thus fixed by a committal to writing? or, in other words, What are the approximate dates at which our four Gospels were written?

Before we attempt an answer, I would again lay stress on the way in which this question has arisen. The great facts of our Saviour's life, death and resurrection do not depend for their evidence primarily upon the Gospels. The outline of the facts is preserved to the world in the continuous tradition of the Christian society, which would assuredly have handed them down from father to son, even if not a single book of Gospel narrative had been written. What the books do is to fill in the outline by giving us early recorded memories of the words and deeds of Christ, thus preserving details which otherwise must have been lost, and affording us a standard by which our conception of the facts may be constantly checked and corrected. The determination of the dates of the books therefore does not directly affect the security of

the great facts on which Christian belief rests. We can approach the question without anxiety or apprehension on this score. It is an important question truly, but we must not mistake the character of its importance.

We begin by asking what means we have of arriving at the approximate dates of the Gospels. If we could at once assume that they were written by the four writers whose names they bear, we should readily arrive at an answer: they would all fall easily within the limits of the first century. Two of them, we should say, were written by apostles, and two by intimate companions of apostles. But this assumption we are not free to make. The titles of the books were not prefixed by the writers themselves, who never mention their own names: they are derived from the tradition of the Church—a tradition which needs to be tested.

It is sometimes said that the formula 'according to,' in the title, for example, 'The Gospel according to Matthew,' was not intended to imply that St Matthew was the writer of that Gospel, but only that this book contains the Gospel as he was accustomed to declare it. That is a view which I cannot accept. In the earliest

sense in which the word was used there could be only *one Gospel*—the Gospel, or good news, which was revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To speak of four *Gospels* would have seemed ridiculous until a later period, when any record of the life of Christ had come to be called 'a Gospel.' What the titles intended to express was the one Gospel according to the presentation of it by different writers. In our oldest manuscripts the four Gospels are regarded as a whole, and treated as though they had one general title, *The Gospel;* for the separate books are simply headed by what were supposed to be their author's names—'according to Matthew,' 'according to Mark,' and so forth. These uniform titles belong to the period when the four books were collected to form one whole; they certainly do not proceed from the authors themselves: and as certainly, in my view, they were intended by those who prefixed them to imply authorship.

The tradition of the names of the authors comes to us from a very early time: say, the middle of the second century at latest. It would be uncritical to abandon an early and continuous tradition of this kind, unless good reason could

be given for doing so. In trying to test the tradition by the evidence of the books themselves we shall do well to begin with St Luke's Gospel. For this is the first volume of a larger work, of which the Acts of the Apostles forms a second volume. It is an exceptional advantage to have so large a body of material to deal with in seeking for indications of date and authorship. And as a matter of fact we find that, when the history which this writer narrates reaches a certain point in the life of St Paul, he begins to say, *We* did this and that, intimating his own presence at the scenes which he records. A careful study of this part of the book shews, to my mind undoubtedly, that the writer of what are called the '*We* sections' is the same as the writer of the whole work, including the Gospel. His style is too clearly marked to leave us in doubt on this point. Thus we have the important fact that our third Gospel was written by a fellow-traveller of St Paul.[1] And so we are getting

[1] I would advise those who desire to see the question argued in a scholarly and simple way to read a little book on *The Authenticity of St Luke's Gospel* by the late Bishop of Bath and Wells, Lord Arthur Hervey (published by S.P.C.K.). It is a good example of the treatment of an argument of this kind.

at a date. For he brings St Paul's story down to the end of the two years of his Roman imprisonment, which is placed in the spring of 63 by Bp Lightfoot and four or five years earlier by Dr Harnack. I think that it is almost certain that the writer contemplated a third volume, for he ends off the second very abruptly, and in a way that is in strong contrast with his formal preface; so that we have no right to conclude that the whole work was written by the year 63. I should incline to put it shortly after 70; I am not convinced that it need fall quite so late as between 78 and 93, the limits proposed by Dr Harnack.

Thus at the outset we have discovered firm ground; and taking our stand here we are able to look back to an earlier period. St Luke—for I do not hesitate to identify him with the companion of St Paul of whom we have been speaking—mentions in the preface to his whole work that he has had predecessors who have already written records of the early days. We should have known that, even if he had not told it us: for when we set St Luke's Gospel side by side with St Matthew's and St Mark's, we find that a great many incidents which he relates are related by

one or both of the others; that often the incidents follow one another in the same order; and that the actual language used in describing them is frequently the same. The fact that they have so much common matter has led to their being often arranged for purposes of study in a synopsis or common view; and, consequently, in modern times they have been given the name of the synoptic Gospels to distinguish them from St John's Gospel, which will not easily fit into the same scheme. What is called the problem of the synoptic Gospels (or, more shortly, the synoptic problem) is the difficult question how we are to account for their being so like each other, and yet presenting a vast number of exceedingly minute differences, besides offering some variations of order and many passages narrated by one only, or two only, of the three.

We shall return to this problem at a later stage; but I should wish to say a little at once as to the results of a prolonged study of it. Almost every section of St Mark is found either in St Matthew or in St Luke, or in both of them. The order of St Mark's incidents is, with hardly an exception, preserved either in one or in both; that is to say, where St Matthew deserts it St

Luke keeps it, and *vice versâ*. And the phraseology of St Mark is often preserved by both, and still more often by one where the other has changed it. The most natural explanation of this would be that both St Matthew and St Luke used the work of St Mark, adding to it new matter and often modifying its language, which is rugged and sometimes obscure. If this explanation be not accepted, the next in probability is that all three used some document which is now lost, and that, whereas the others often deviated from it, St Mark reproduced it with extraordinary fidelity. For myself, I am convinced, after much investigation, that the former is the true explanation, and that our St Mark was used by St Matthew and by St Luke.

If this be admitted we have a means of arriving at the date of St Mark's Gospel as well. For it must have been already written when St Luke set about his work. Thus it was certainly written while some of the apostles were still living, and probably before the fall of Jerusalem in the year 70. Dr Harnack, who admits, as an ascertained result of criticism, that St Mark was used by St Luke, gives as its probable date the years between 65 and 70. This date obviously makes

it possible that the book should have been written by the author whose name it bears according to the second-century tradition. Can we justify that tradition still further? I believe that we can. The tradition does not confine itself to the title, 'according to St Mark.' It takes a definite form. St Mark is said to have been the 'interpreter' of St Peter, and to have written his Gospel in Rome from information derived from that apostle.[1] Now it is exceedingly probable that St Peter could not write or preach, even if he could speak at all, in any language but his mother tongue, the Aramaic of Galilee, a local dialect akin to Hebrew. When he wrote or preached to Greek-speaking people he would use Mark or some other disciple as his interpreter. It is very natural to suppose that St Mark might, with his special opportunities, desire to record in writing St Peter's recollections of the life of Christ. The Gospel which bears St Mark's name is clearly intended for non-Jewish readers: for

[1] The fragments of Papias, to which reference is made here and below, may be read in Lightfoot's *Apostolic Fathers* (smaller edition: the texts with translations). They are fully discussed by Lightfoot in his Essays on *Supernatural Religion*. The various traditions regarding St Mark are investigated by Dr Swete in his *Commentary on St Mark's Gospel*.

again and again he explains Jewish customs and Jewish words in a way that would be needless for Jews, but quite necessary for Roman readers. There are points of detail which further corroborate the view, and we may feel satisfied in accepting St Mark's authorship as practically certain, and the year 65 as a probable date.[1]

When we come to speak of St Matthew, we have no such helps as we have had for St Luke and St Mark. It may be taken as certain that he used St Mark, and also that he did not use St Luke, nor was used by him. It is true that second-century tradition assigns a Gospel to him; but whereas the details of that tradition helped us in regard to St Mark, they introduce a serious difficulty in regard to St Matthew. For the tradition—to give the words of Papias, who is said to have been a disciple of St John—states that 'Matthew composed the oracles of the Lord in the Hebrew tongue,' meaning probably his native Aramaic. But it is certain that our St Matthew is not a Greek translation of an Aramaic or Hebrew book. This is shewn, among

[1] It may indeed be placed some years earlier than this, if we assume that it was written during St Peter's lifetime, and that St Peter suffered, as tradition asserts, during the Neronian persecution.

other proofs, by the fact that he embodies whole sentences of the Greek St Mark, as well as of a second Greek document which was also used by St Luke.

Our St Matthew is demonstrably composed in the main out of two Greek books, and there is no ground for thinking that any part of the narrative ever existed in any other language. Therefore, we conclude either that Papias made a mistake in saying that St Matthew wrote in Hebrew, or that if he wrote in Hebrew his work has perished without leaving a trace behind it. In the latter case we may account for the title by the general belief on the one hand that St Matthew had written a Gospel, and the existence on the other hand of a nameless Gospel, which came to be attributed to him when his Hebrew Gospel had fallen out of knowledge.[1]

I do not think, therefore, that we can prove the tradition that our first Gospel was written by St Matthew. If indeed a sufficiently early date could be established for the book, then we might

[1] It is conceivable that the non-Marcan Greek document which St Matthew and St Luke used in common was originally written in Aramaic. If so, its authorship might be assigned to the apostle Matthew, and thus we might account to some extent for the statements of Papias. But it must be remembered that this is a purely conjectural hypothesis.

accept the tradition of its authorship in spite of the puzzling statement about its having been written in Hebrew. But what is its probable date? I do not know a harder question in the whole of New Testament criticism. Dr Harnack says 'probably 70–75,' but with the important reservation, 'except certain later additions.' If, however, the Gospel must be regarded as a whole—as, I think, it must be—there is no doubt that he would assign it to a later date. I do not feel that I am entitled at present to express a definite opinion on this difficult question, and therefore I must content myself with leaving the authorship and date alike uncertain.[1] But I would remind you that such a verdict of *non liquet* does not affect the *status* of the book in the New Testament. It nowhere claims to have been written by an eye-witness, or by an apostle, or by any particular person at all. It does not ask to be believed because of its authorship. It stands on its merits; it was accepted by the general consciousness of the Church as a true record and placed among the

[1] For the sake of brevity and clearness, however, I shall frequently use the expression 'St Matthew' to designate the writer of our first Gospel. It will be understood that I do not thereby imply that the writer was the apostle of that name.

canonical books. The heart and mind of the Church in all ages has confirmed this early verdict: indeed it was no churchman but M. Renan who said that it had exerted a greater influence than any other book in the world.

The date and authorship of St John's Gospel will come up for consideration later on. But I may say at this point that there has been some modification of late in the attack which has been made on the Gospel; and that Dr Harnack, in his *Chronology*, from which I have already been quoting, would give as the limits of its date 'not after 110, and not before 80.' As far as time-limits go, therefore, it may have been written by the apostle St John; but Dr Harnack prefers to think, for reasons which do not commend themselves to many, that it was more probably written by another person of the same name—John the presbyter, or elder, of Ephesus. Most of us will be satisfied to accept the earlier date which this scholar allows us, and to retain the unbroken tradition of its apostolic authorship.

Two remarks may be made before we leave this part of our inquiry. (1) I have quoted Dr Harnack's views of the dates of the Gospels for

two reasons: first, because he has quite recently published a valuable work on the *Chronology of Early Christian Literature*, and has given carefully considered judgments, which his ability and learning specially entitle him to pronounce; and, secondly, because he does not start from the point of view of the Church tradition, but has rather been working his way back from the revolutionary positions of the school which dominated German theology some thirty years ago, and to which our own Lightfoot and Hort dealt mortal blows. If he approximates to the older views, it is because a larger study of the whole of the documents of early Christian literature has convinced him that negation had gone too far. He would not, I think, wish to be claimed as an orthodox divine in the English sense; but in sending me his *Chronology* he wrote that he hoped that as to its main positions we should find ourselves in agreement, and that differences would henceforward appear in the interpretation of the books rather than in the problems of their date and authenticity.[1]

[1] The meaning of the latter part of this statement has since been made clear by the publication of his fascinating lectures now translated into English under the title *What is Christianity?*

(2) The other remark which I would make is this: Satisfactory as the results of our inquiry on the whole appear to be, I should not wish it to be thought that the points we have been discussing are vital to the Christian faith. I should not ask a man who had serious doubts of the truth of Christianity to enter upon a literary inquiry as to the date and authorship of the Gospels. I should say: Leave that untouched for the present. Read the books themselves, wholly irrespective of when or by whom they were written, or even of their accuracy in detail. Take the picture of Christ as drawn by the vigorous hand which wrote our second Gospel. Read it as a whole: let the story grow upon you: watch that powerful, sympathetic, original Character: ask how the simple, unliterary author came by his story, if it was not that the story was a direct transcript from the life. If a new Power was then manifested in the world, revealing a new ideal of human goodness, saving men everywhere and only refusing to save Himself, must you not yearn to welcome the belief that this Power was not finally vanquished by death, but still lives to save men to the uttermost?

CHAPTER II

THE USE OF ST MARK'S GOSPEL BY ST MATTHEW AND ST LUKE

The view that St Mark's Gospel lay before St Matthew and St Luke, and that they embodied the main part of it with considerable modifications of detail, would require for its justification a more elaborate discussion than could be entered upon here. I recognise that this view is not free from difficulties; but I can confidently commend it as a working hypothesis, which will be found exceedingly instructive to the student who employs it in his comparative investigation of the synoptic narratives. It will be well, therefore, to indicate by an example the general character of the argument on which it is based.

Let us take for examination a particular incident which is common to the three Gospels—namely, the question put to our Lord in the temple with regard to His authority.[1] Our first task is to set the three narratives in parallel

[1] Matt. xxi 23–27; Mark xi 27–33; Luke xx 1–8.

columns, writing them in short sentences so as better to catch the eye.[1]

And here a word must be interposed as to differences of reading, which, even though minute in themselves, gain an importance in an inquiry of this kind. We are so accustomed to printed books that we are apt to forget that until the last five hundred years it was not possible to put out an edition of a thousand copies of a book all exactly alike. Indeed you could not get two copies which were exactly alike. It is perhaps a humiliating fact, but none the less it is a fact, that no one, however trained and experienced, can copy exactly what he sees before him for any number of pages together. He is practically certain, however careful he may be, to introduce some changes. In early times this mere human inability to be accurate necessarily affected the text of the Gospels. But other causes were at work which greatly increased the probability of variation. The owner of a book sometimes wrote in the margin some little addition or supposed improvement, and the copyist in his turn, think-

[1] The student will find this preliminary work admirably done for him in Mr Wright's *Synopsis of the Gospels in Greek;* but he will gain much by the experience of constructing a synopsis of some passages for himself.

ing it was something that had been left out of the text by mistake, put it into his new copy. Moreover, in the case of the Gospels the parallel texts were in the scribe's mind, and unconsciously or consciously he would write a passage in St Mark as he had already written it in St Matthew; sometimes, no doubt, he would definitely try to make the two accounts harmonise in points of language. In recent times the science of textual criticism has sprung up, and we have been enabled not only to go back to very early manuscripts, but also to group our manuscripts in families and trace the origin of many of these 'various readings,' as they are called. The results of this laborious and difficult work are best represented in the edition of the New Testament in Greek issued by Westcott and Hort. For the English reader the more important changes will be found in the Revised Version, which for the purpose of minute comparison is preferable to the Authorised Version.

Having, then, the three narratives written out in parallel columns, in accordance with the most accurate text at our disposal, we underline in the middle column (St Mark) such words as are also found in both the side columns. At once we see

that what we have underlined may, but for a few gaps, be read by itself as a continuous and intelligible narrative; and we feel certain that these three accounts cannot be independent of each other; for no three writers would by sheer coincidence have used so many words in common. It might, indeed, be said that the actual words spoken by our Lord, or by His adversaries, were treasured in most faithful memories. But this will not help us to explain the likeness of the narrative in which these words are set. Look, for example, at the phrase which describes the effect of Christ's question upon His opponents: 'they reasoned with themselves, saying.' Why did not one of the writers say, 'they were troubled,' or 'they were perplexed,' or 'they took counsel together'? Why do they all use the verb 'reasoned' and the participle 'saying'? Indeed we may further ask why they all agree in inserting a description of the inner feelings or private discussions of the antagonists at all; why no one of them passes straight to the answer which was ultimately made. We see then that this remarkable similarity is not confined to the spoken words, but extends to the narrative framework in which the words are set.

We may now take a further step. If St Matthew and St Luke both agree to preserve so much of what we see in St Mark, it is likely that St Matthew has preserved some things besides which St Luke has dropped, and that St Luke has preserved others which St Matthew has dropped. Accordingly we go on to underline such words of St Mark as are found either in St Matthew alone or in St Luke alone. We now find that we have underlined almost the whole of St Mark's narrative. A few scraps only remain unattested, such as the words 'again to Jerusalem,' 'to do these things' (which is a repetition of words used already), and 'answer me' (an interjected phrase not necessary to the sense). I think that the impression gained by any one who will take the trouble to do what I have suggested will certainly be that St Mark's Gospel lay before the other two evangelists, and that they used it very freely, and between them embodied almost the whole of it. Of course we must not generalise from a single passage. The inquiry must be pursued throughout the whole of the Gospel, and we must not neglect the comparatively few words which St Matthew and St Luke have in common, but which are not found

in St Mark's narrative of the same incident. It is such words that lend countenance to the alternative theory that all three evangelists were using another document which is now lost. That is a hypothesis which is very attractive, and for some time I thought that it offered the best explanation: but further study convinced me that it was cumbersome and unnecessary, and that it introduced difficulties greater than those which it promised to solve.

We have thus seen something of the process of the embodiment of St Mark by the two subsequent writers. It is not a slavish copying, but an intelligent and discriminating appropriation. If a modern writer were to act thus we should give it the harsh name of plagiarism. We allow the appropriation of matter, but not of words, unless indeed there is some sign, such as inverted commas, to indicate the writer's obligation to his predecessor. But in the age with which we are dealing such appropriation was considered perfectly legitimate. Books were made out of books. No such thing as property in words was thought of, no notion of copyright existed. If a thing was well said, that was a reason for saying it again in the same way; if it could be

improved, then by all means it should be modified, as much of the old being kept as seemed desirable to the new writer. Among the Jews we find that this method of making new books out of old ones had been practised from the earliest times; the Book of Genesis, for example, is undoubtedly made up to a large extent out of pre-existing documents. And the same method was in vogue in the first and second centuries of our era, both among Jews and Christians. The *Didaché*, or Teaching of the Apostles, which was brought to light about twenty years ago, has embodied an earlier book called *The Two Ways*, and has itself been reproduced in a modified form at a later period.

Let us next take a few examples of the changes which it was felt desirable by the later evangelists to make in St Mark's narrative. In Mark ii 26 we read in reference to David's taking the sacred shew-bread for his hungry men that he entered into the house of God 'when Abiathar was high priest.' As a matter of fact we read in 1 Sam. xxi that Ahimelech, the father of Abiathar, was the high priest who gave David the shew-bread and was put to death by Saul for doing so. As giving a date to the incident the men-

tion of the better-known Abiathar might be thought sufficiently accurate; but the expression was at least open to objection, and it is interesting to see that it is simply dropped by St Matthew and St Luke, although they agree in giving the words which immediately precede and those which immediately follow. It has been suggested that a confusion between Ahimelech and Abiathar was of earlier date than the writing of the Gospels; but it is at any rate plain that it was well not to reproduce a statement which was in obvious contradiction to the Old Testament narrative. That is an instance of the removal of words which seemed to involve an historical inaccuracy. We may now note a case of apparent geographical inexactness. St Mark calls the little sheet of water which he has made so sacredly familiar to us all, 'the sea of Galilee,' and very often he simply calls it 'the sea' (comp. Josh. xii 3). So also does St Matthew. But not so St Luke, who knew the sea and its terrors too well; he, with his noted accuracy of expression, changes 'the sea' of St Mark into 'the lake.'

But it is time to pass from details to a broader survey. With the exception of three or four incidents the whole matter of St Mark's Gospel is

to be found either in both or in one at least of the other evangelists. And the order in which his incidents are arranged is always attested by one or by the other. It is clear that they were anxious to lose nothing of his work which they could find room to embody; but, on the other hand, they must have recognised in it a serious deficiency, which they on their part were in a position to supply.

For the scope of St Mark's Gospel was limited. In the earliest days the all-important things would seem to be those which concerned our Lord's ministry and His death and resurrection. These were the things which it was necessary, as we read in the first chapter of the Acts, that the newly elected apostle should be able to witness to from personal knowledge: he must be one, St Peter says, of those 'which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that He was taken up from us.' This corresponds closely with the general scope of St Mark's Gospel. Its opening words are, 'The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,' and its first narrative is 'the baptism of John.' And, again, this period

corresponded to St Peter's experience, which may possibly also help to account for the limitation of this Gospel to Galilee with just one week in Jerusalem at the close.

We can readily understand that this limitation offered in itself (even apart from the scantiness of St Mark's record of our Lord's teaching, which we shall consider later on) a sufficient reason for the writing of other and fuller narratives. It was clearly to be desired that something should be recorded of the genealogy of our Lord, of the wonderful early days, and of the Holy Family. And St Luke in particular was much more interested in Jerusalem, and would wish to tell more of what took place there. He had set himself to gather information as a historian. St Mark was to him only one source; he had another, as we shall see, which was also in writing; and much he doubtless gained from oral inquiry. He had accordingly to fit in a great deal of new matter. A substantial part of this came at the outset before the Baptist's preaching; and so it did not disturb the Marcan order, for it was all introductory. But later on he felt bound to make some rearrangement, so as to give reasonable positions to his fresh incidents

and to his fuller records of teaching. The amount of new matter introduced had a further effect; it made it necessary for him to clip and pare the old, so far as that could be done without serious loss. And so the redundancy of St Mark, who is exceedingly repetitive, was pruned by the hand of one who was an artist in style; and in the process many little details fell away, as well as complete incidents, and even in one case a whole group of incidents. For it was necessary that the writer should put forth his work in volumes of a manageable size. His Gospel and the Acts are almost identical in bulk, and each reaches what appears to have been the recognised limit for a volume.

The writer of St Matthew's Gospel treated the same problem somewhat differently. He too felt the need of beginning earlier; and he too had much new matter, especially in the way of discourses. As to order, he had a method of his own, which was to bring like to like, to group incidents and teachings of a similar nature. Thus we have a group of parables, another of conflicts with the Pharisees, and several groups of teachings, of which the most noted is placed at the forefront of the Galilean ministry as form-

ing the Sermon on the Mount. He therefore took parts of St Mark's Gospel where he wanted them; and he has in consequence some notable repetitions. But he too found it necessary to abbreviate St Mark's narratives, and he does so with a freer hand than St Luke; as, for example, by compressing a story into a short compass, whereas St Luke preferred to omit it altogether rather than cut it down (comp. *e.g.* Mark xi 12–14, 20–24, the withering of the fig tree, with Matt. xxi 18–22). There were other causes which led each of these writers to modify the language of St Mark; for each in his own way was a master of style, which St Mark certainly was not; and each had a clear purpose before him, which guided the selection and presentation of the materials at his disposal.[1]

Before leaving this part of our subject, I would call attention to two small personal notices which occur in St Mark, but are not reproduced by St Matthew or St Luke. One of these is the statement that at our Lord's arrest, when 'all forsook Him and fled,' a young man attempted to follow Him, and when they laid hold of him left his

[1] See further, in illustration of the foregoing paragraphs, Note A, on St Mark and his successors.

garment in their hands and fled. The other evangelists do not retain this little incident. It was quite unimportant to the history; it led to nothing; it ended at once in a hasty retreat. How came St Mark to record it? We have the explanation at once if we adopt the suggestion that the nameless young man was St Mark himself. I know nothing against this view; and in favour of it may be pleaded the statement which we read in the Acts, that Mary the mother of Mark had a house in Jerusalem and was one of the early believers.

The other notice to which I have referred is a statement in regard to Simon of Cyrene—that strange figure from Africa, the dark and suffering continent, who in a kind of mysterious prophecy is compelled to bear the cross of the world's Redeemer. St Mark alone tells us that he was 'the father of Alexander and Rufus.' Possibly the later evangelists had no knowledge of these two brothers, and saw no kind of value in retaining their names. But they must have been known to St Mark, and probably to those for whom his Gospel was primarily written. Is it a mere coincidence that when St Paul writes to the Roman Christians, long before he ever

visited Rome, he sends a greeting to a man named Rufus and to his mother, who had met the apostle somewhere and had shewed him no ordinary kindness? 'Salute,' he says, 'Rufus . . . and his mother and mine' (Rom. xvi 13). It is not an idle fancy to suppose that St Mark, in writing the story of Simon's bearing the cross, added for the sake of Roman Christians this little touch of personal interest; and, if so, she who was a second mother to St Paul would seem to have been the widow of the man who carried the cross after Jesus.

I hope that in the light of what I have very briefly said you will be encouraged to read St Mark's Gospel with a fresh interest as the work of a single hand which paints with broad strokes and bright colours the earliest picture we possess of the Saviour of the world. I would have you not only study parts of it in detail, but also read it rapidly through as a whole; trying to read it as you would read a new story which you had never heard of before; watching closely the prelude to the story, the first appearance of the young prophet from Nazareth, what He says and what He does, the effect produced on the people and then presently on their leaders,

the bright welcome passing gradually into suspicion, the causes of the offence which He gave, the development of the political situation, and above all the unique character which little by little is unveiled to us until it reaches its climax in voluntary death. You will note how St John the Baptist first appears on the scene with a call to national repentance and a promise that one stronger than he is coming after him. You will see Jesus coming from Nazareth and promising to fulfil all expectations, offering to men good news from God. You will observe how He fulfils John's sign. He is strong to draw men after Him by a word, strong to cast out the evil spirit who interrupts His teaching, strong to heal all manner of diseases, strong to resist the first outburst of popularity which threatens to divert Him from His chosen course. And then you will mark how this strength is linked with a tender sympathy; how He touches the leper; how He gets into touch, as we say, with the paralysed young man before He will heal his disease; how He draws to Himself the outcast tax-gatherers who are 'not in society,' pleading, when He is rebuked, that they are sick and that He is their doctor. You will see how gently

He deals with those to whom such actions give legitimate offence, how He understands and makes allowance for their natural prejudice. And, at the same time, you will observe how His strength and His sympathy are matched by His unwonted liberty from conventional restrictions; how really revolutionary He is, how He claims that customs are meant to serve men rather than to rule them, and how all the while He is making us look to Himself as a new fount of authority, though He puts forward at first no distinct claim to be the expected Messiah. You will specially observe that on several important occasions He speaks of Himself by a new title as 'the Son of Man,' as truly human and, at the same time, representing all men.[1] And you will find that He expects His followers to live a life like His own, a life of continuous service, seeking no private ends but perpetually giving itself to supply all human needs which cross its path; a life which finds its fitting close on Calvary, and is truly summed up in the mocking epigram hurled at Him as He hangs upon the cross, 'He saved others: Himself He cannot save.'

[1] See Note B, on the title 'The Son of Man.'

So you will read; and as you read you will worship. The homage of your whole being will go out towards a life which seems both 'human and divine, the highest, holiest manhood.' You will not understand how God and man are blended here; but you will feel that you must worship, and that it cannot be wrong to worship; for nothing so divine has anywhere been seen in nature or in human life. You will say with the amazed Roman officer who stood on guard at the foot of the cross, 'Truly this man was the Son of God.'

Such a picture could never have been drawn by any human imagination. It is inexplicable altogether, if it be not a direct transcript from the life. The Christ of the Gospel is His own evidence. It must have been so, we say as we lay down the book, or it could not have been written so. It was so, and it is so: for He is not dead, but He is risen, and is alive and with us now. 'Jesus Christ is the *same* yesterday and to-day and for ever.'

NOTE A

A further Comparison between St Mark and his Successors

St Mark's Gospel is characterised throughout by a certain fulness of expression which is combined with extreme simplicity. The fulness has nothing of turgidity about it; it is not in the least due to fine writing; it is mainly produced by repetition both of ideas and also of words. The story is told as it would be in conversation; dialogue plays a large part in it, and the utterances of speakers are introduced in the plainest way, generally by 'he saith' and 'they say,' with no further distinction of the interlocutors. Emphasis is gained by the repetition of an idea in a slightly heightened form and by the frequent use of contrast. Indeed, repetition seems to be welcomed for its own sake. Two phrases are used where one would suffice to carry on the narrative, but the second generally adds some fresh detail. Much could be dispensed with if there were cause for parsimony, but nothing is really otiose. So long as the story is plainly told, the words in which it is couched seem to be little regarded.

Two examples of the repetitive character of the narrative may be given by way of illustration :—

(1) '*Many publicans and sinners* sat down to

meat with Jesus and *His disciples;* for they were *many* and they followed Him. And the scribes and Pharisees, seeing that *He eateth with the sinners and publicans*, said to *His disciples*, Wherefore *eateth He with the publicans and sinners?*' (ii 15, 16).

How much more briefly this may be told, can be seen at once by a comparison of either St Matthew or St Luke at this point.

(2) 'And again He began to *teach* by *the sea*, and a very great *multitude* is gathered unto Him; so that He entered into a boat and sat in *the sea*, and all the *multitude* was by *the sea* on the land. And He was *teaching* them in parables many things; and He said to them in His *teaching:* Hearken; behold there went forth a *sower* to *sow*, and as he *sowed*,' &c. (iv 1 ff.).

Here there are three mentions of 'teaching,' three of 'the sea,' three of 'sowing,' and two of 'the multitude.' The passage immediately before this, the incident of 'the Mother and brethren,' is even more noteworthy for its verbal repetitions, but it is too long to quote.

The 'picturesque details,' upon which so much stress is laid in the criticism of St Mark's Gospel, really belong to the same category of fulness of expression. They are interesting to us at this distance of time, for they help us to realise the scenes with greater vividness. But they are by no means necessary to the story, whether we regard it as the record of a historical incident, or as the vehicle of a moral lesson. If space had to be gained, these details might be cancelled as

trivial in comparison with recorded sayings of Christ.

Again, it is important to observe, in discussing the fate of these 'picturesque details,' that a very large number of them describe emotions, or acts expressive of emotion, on the part of the Lord and His disciples. Thus, in the case of the Lord, anger, compassion, complacence, are each recorded three times: grief, agony, surprise, vehemence, each once. And of actions we have 'looking around' five times, 'looking upon' twice, 'looking up' once, 'turning' thrice, 'groaning' twice, 'embracing in the arms' twice, 'falling down' once. But when we come to compare the parallel passages in St Matthew and St Luke, we find that all the more painful emotions disappear, with one exception (the agony). Anger, grief, groaning, vehemence are gone; compassion remains twice in St Matthew, complacence (if it may be so termed) once in both; and in a few instances a substituted word seems to indicate the previous existence of something which has been removed.

There clearly must be a reason why the more painful emotions are less represented in the other Gospels. The frequent suppression of the record of emotions in general might be due to a desire to abbreviate, which would lead to the obliteration of features not essential to the story. But that this particular class of emotions should entirely disappear is probably the result of a kind of reverence which belonged to a slightly later stage of reflection, when certain traits might

even seem to be derogatory to the dignity of the sacred Character.

This is borne out by the analysis of similar details in regard to the disciples. Perplexity (5 times), amazement (4), fear (4), anger (1), hardness of heart (1), drowsiness (1), are all recorded with more or less frequency in St Mark. But in the other evangelists we find the same tendency to eliminate as before. It may be due, here again, partly to a desire to abbreviate, but yet more to the development of a corresponding reverence for the character of the apostles.

When, however, we come to examine parallel notices in regard to 'the multitudes,' who listened to our Lord's teaching and witnessed His miracles, there is small trace of any such omission. The wonderment of the multitudes was an important element in the history, and at least twice in St Luke we find that the phrases of St Mark are heightened. In the case of our Lord's adversaries, indeed, so far from finding any omission of the details of their emotions and actions, we even seem to discover a general tendency both in St Matthew and in St Luke to expand and emphasise the notices of hostility.

No one who has not collected all the instances, of which I have given but a rapid summary, and tabulated them side by side with their parallels in the other Gospels, would readily believe how large an amount of alteration of St Mark by the other evangelists can be at once accounted for by the process which I have just described. For the excision of the details in question leads in

many places not merely to the loss of a word, but to the dropping of a whole clause or to its complete recasting. And this, after all, is but one small cause that might reasonably be considered to have induced change in the narrative as written by St Mark. It may be well here to note some other points which might strike a subsequent writer as calling for modification.

I have already referred to the narrowness of scope of St Mark's narrative regarded as a whole.[1] The need of some account of the genealogy and birth of the Christ, and of His early days, would be quickly felt, as also the need of a further record of His work in the sacred city of Jerusalem. Above all, some further examples of the Lord's teaching would be required. In St Mark the personality of the great Prophet is everything. Teaching is subordinated to action. Again and again we are told that He taught, and the effects of His teaching are noted. But what did He teach? We are given a few parables out of many, a number of striking sayings, often very difficult; but we learn little of His lessons about life, and almost nothing of the aims and issues of His work as the Son of Man. Later evangelists must have counted this a serious defect; and they would be the more eager to supply it, if there lay at hand ample materials in another document in which teachings held a more prominent place. These considerations suffice to explain the amplification and to some extent

[1] See above, pp. 31 f.

also the dislocation of St Mark's narrative, when it came to be embodied by St Matthew and St Luke.

With regard to the modification of the style of those passages which they incorporated directly from St Mark, we quickly discover that both St Matthew and St Luke were, in comparison with their predecessor, literary artists of no mean power. Of St Luke this is universally granted: I believe it to be true only in a less degree of St Matthew, though his methods are very different, and he is less ready to take offence at mere points of style.

It has been pointed out recently, in connexion with books of the New Testament, that in ancient times there were recognised limits which were imposed by material conditions upon the length of writings. Both St Matthew and St Luke had so much to add, that it was likely that they would exercise a certain economy in embodying earlier materials. In the case of St Mark's Gospel, not much could be wisely omitted altogether. But the superabundance of description could be cut down, the perpetual repetition might be avoided, and space might thus be gained for fresh matter without exceeding the ordinary compass of a volume.[1]

[1] The three longest books of the New Testament are almost identical in length. Measuring by the pages of Westcott and Hort's edition, we find Matt. = 70, Luke = 72, Acts = 70. St Luke, having reached what Origen might have called the *αὐτάρκης περιγραφή* of a volume (*contra Cels.* iii ad fin., iv ad fin.), ends his Gospel with a participial clause, at a point where there was a brief resting-place in the history. His second volume he similarly closes within a like compass at another natural resting-place—the two years' imprison-

As the new writers, then, were not mere copyists, it was likely that many other peculiarities of St Mark's style would disappear before their revising touch. The extreme simplicity of construction, for example, which added clause to clause with an ever-recurring 'and,' was certain to give way to a more graceful, if not a more effective, method of narration. So again the 190 short relative clauses, which frequently take the place of substantives or participles, or which add nothing but a little emphasis, were destined to a severe reduction in passing under the censorship of any writer who thought in Greek and not, as St Mark probably did, in Aramaic.

Apart from points of style, of which many more examples might easily be given,[1] there were various details which seemed to call for correction. Here and there the very simplicity of the narrative, or its curtness, made it at least ambiguous, if not unintelligible; as in the words (xi 3) *ὁ κύριος αὐτοῦ χρείαν ἔχει καὶ εὐθὺς αὐτὸν ἀποστέλλει*

ment of St Paul — ending even more abruptly with an adverb. It is difficult to think that he did not contemplate adding a third volume of similar compass, and ending with a peroration, in the style of his preface, which would have brought his whole work to a formal close.

[1] Of St Mark's 64 instances of *ἵνα*, which he used with Semitic freedom, St Matthew retains 17, St Luke 14; and almost every substitute for it involves further alteration of the sentence which contained it. Of St Mark's 150 historic presents, St Luke retains but one, St Matthew 21, in 9 instances prefixing *τότε*. This alone accounts for a vast amount of change. (Some of these figures may require modification, but I think that they are substantially correct.)

πάλιν ὧδε, where each of the clauses is capable of two interpretations; and in the strange utterance regarding Elias (ix 12, 13). Elsewhere actual mistakes were to be rectified, as at the outset (i 2) where the words of Malachi are cited as from Isaiah, and in ii 26 'the high-priesthood of Abiathar.'

At other points there were expressions which were open to serious misunderstanding, and which a sense of reverence might remove: as in the several places where it is said that our Lord 'could not' do this or that;[1] or, as we have already seen, where anger is attributed to Him. Under the same head fall those miracles in which cures are effected with reluctance or with apparent difficulty.

St Mark's Gospel is most readily accounted for as the product of two factors; the narrative of a Galilean eye-witness, and the interpretation of that narrative in a Greek form for Roman readers. Tradition points to St Peter, the Galilean fisherman, as the source of the narrative, and to St Mark, his interpreter at Rome, as the writer of the book. Everything in the scope and style of the work is in harmony with this view of its origin.

We have nothing to tell us that St Peter was with our Lord in several of the visits to Jerusalem which are described so fully by St John. In any case his home in every sense was Galilee; he was at home there, as he was not at home in Jerusalem. Again, underneath the whole of the phraseology

[1] Mark i 45, vi 5 (contrast Matt. xiii 58), vii 24.

lies a Semitic element; it often protrudes itself to such an extent as to make us believe that, if the writer was not actually translating a Semitic narrative, he must have thought in a Semitic language, though he wrote in Greek; and he delights to retain Aramaic words at points of special interest, though he is always careful to follow them by a literal translation.[1] His Jewish mind, too, does full justice to incidents which primarily interested only a Jew; but here again he is copious in explanation, never losing sight of the needs of those for whom he is writing. It was natural that other narratives should come to be compiled later on under other conditions, and for other readers. Apart from the modifications which we have considered as in any case to be expected, others would result from the temperament of the author and from the requirements of those whom he addressed. Thus a man well read in the ancient scriptures might feel

[1] See Mark iii 17 *Boanerges*, which is Sons of thunder; v 41, *Talîtha cûm*, which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise; vii 11, *Corban*, which is Gift; vii 34, *Ephphatha*, which is Be opened; x 46, the son of Timæus, *Bartimæus*; xiv 36, *Abba*, Father; xv 22, the place *Golgotha*, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull; xv 34, *Elôî, Elôî, lamâ sabachthâni?* which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? The parallels in the other evangelists should be traced in Wright's *Synopsis*. It will be found that the Aramaic words disappear, except in the last two instances, where St Matthew retains them.

A similar study should be made of St Mark's Latin words: κράβαττον, ii 4, 9, 11, 12, vi 55; μόδιον, iv 21; λεγιών, v 9; σπεκουλάτωρ, vi 27; ξεστής, vii 4; δηνάριον, vi 37, xii 15, xiv 5; κοδράντης, xii 42; φραγελλοῦν, xv 15; πραιτώριον, xv 16; κεντυρίων, xv 39, 44, 45.

called to write a Gospel for Greek-speaking Jewish converts. He would dwell on the fulfilment of prophecy, and would colour his writings with Old Testament allusions. Another might write for Gentile converts, addressing himself to educated Greeks. Mere Jewish custom would have little interest for his readers, except where it gave the necessary historical colouring. Teachings, in particular, which dealt with Jewish matters primarily, would give way to others of more general interest. Two such evangelists, very differently constituted and very differently placed, but each with a sense of style and with an additional supply of materials, are before us in the writers of our first and third Gospels.

NOTE B

On the Title 'The Son of Man'

The title 'the Son of Man' occurs in every one of the *strata* of evangelic record which we have learned to distinguish—namely,—

(1) St Mark;
(2) The non-Marcan document;
(3) Additional matter peculiar to St Luke;
(4) Additional matter peculiar to St Matthew;
(5) St John.

The table which follows will show at a glance its distribution in the synoptic Gospels.

THE SON OF MAN

I.—Passages belonging to St Mark

	Mark.		Luke.	Matthew.
1.	ii 10	Authority to forgive sins	v 24	ix 6
2.	ii 28	Lord of the Sabbath	vi 5	xii 8
3.	viii 31	Must suffer many things	ix 22	*xvi 21
4.	viii 38	Shall be ashamed of him, when	ix 26	xvi 27
5.	ix 9	Save when . . . rise from the dead	.....	xvii 9
6.	ix 12	How it is written . . . should suffer	.....	xvii 12
7.	ix 31	Is delivered into the hands of men	ix 44	xvii 22
8.	x 33	We go up to Jerusalem and . . . delivered	xviii. 31	xx 18
9.	x 45	Not to be ministered unto	.....	xx 28
10.	xiii 26	Coming in clouds	xxi. 27	xxiv 30
11. 12.	xiv 21 *bis*	Goeth as it is written . . . By whom . . . is betrayed	xxii 22	xxvi 24 *bis*
13.	xiv 41	Behold, . . . is betrayed	.....	xxvi 45
14.	xiv 62	On the right hand . . . coming with clouds	xxii 69	xxvi 64

II.—Passages belonging to the non-Marcan Document

	Luke.		Matthew.
15.	vi 22	As evil for the sake of	*v 11
16.	vii 34	Came eating and drinking	xi 19
17.	ix 58	Hath not where to lay His head	viii 20
18.	xi 30	Sign of Jonah	xii 40 (*cf.* *xvi 4)
19.	xii 8	Confess before the angels	*x 32
20.	xii 10	A word against . . .	xii 32 (*cf.* *Mark iii 28)
21.	xii 40	An hour when ye think not	xxiv 44
22.	xvii 24	As the lightning . . . so shall be	xxiv 27
23.	xvii 26	Days of Noah	xxiv 37
24.	xvii 30	Days of Lot	xxiv 39 (Lot omitted)

III.—Insertions into Marcan (or non-Marcan) Passages

	Luke.	Mark.	Matthew.
25. . . .	xxi 36 To stand before the Son of Man . . .	*xiii 33	*xxiv 42
26. . . .	xxii 48 Judas, betrayest thou	*xiv 45	*xxvi 50
27. . . .	xxiv 7 Remember how He spake	*xvi 7	*xxviii 7
	Matthew.		Luke.
28. . . .	xvi 13 Whom say men	*viii 27	*ix 18
29. . . .	xvi 28 Coming in His kingdom	*ix 1	*ix 27
30. . . .	xix 28 On the throne of His glory . . .	*x 29	*xxii 28 f.
31. . . .	xxiv 30 Shall appear the sign of	*xiii 26	*xxi 27
32. . . .	xxvi 2 Ye know that after two days . . .	*xiv 1	*xxii 1

IV.—Passages peculiar to St Luke or to St Matthew

	Luke.
33. . . .	xvii 22 To see one of the days of
34. . . .	xviii 8 Shall He find faith?
35. . . .	xix 10 To seek and to save
	Matthew.
36. . . .	x 23 Cities of Israel
37, 38. .	xiii 37, 41 Soweth the good seed . . . send forth His angels
39. . . .	xxv 31 Come in His glory . . . all nations

* An asterisk prefixed marks the absence of the title in the parallel.

One or two instructive facts appear at once from an examination of this table:—

(*a*) In St Mark the title is used eight times in passages which foretell the Passion or the Resurrection. In the non-Marcan document it is never so used; this document seems to contain no explicit prophecies of this kind.

(*b*) The two passages in which the 'coming with clouds' is mentioned belong likewise to St Mark. These again are explicit prophecies. They are of special interest as being the only passages which directly connect the title with Dan. vii 13 ff. It is to be noted that they belong to the latest period of the ministry.

(*c*) The earliest of the passages in St Mark are two which bring out with special clearness the representative character of the title.

In order to study the meaning of the title, it is necessary to trace the usage of two other titles, 'the Son of David' and 'the Son of God.' And to do this satisfactorily we must note all the principal references which our Lord makes to His own person. It will suffice for the present to confine our attention to St Mark's Gospel.

1. We begin with the words spoken to our Lord at His Baptism (i 11): 'Thou art My Son, the Beloved; in Thee I am well-pleased' (*Σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα*). I have given this literal translation in order to bring out the allusions to two passages of the Old Testament. The first clause is obviously Messianic: it at once recalls Ps. ii 7 f., 'The Lord

hath said unto me, *Thou art My Son;* this day have I begotten thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' The remainder recalls Isa. xlii 1, 'Behold My servant, whom I uphold; *Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth:* I have put My Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.' It is interesting to note that though neither the Hebrew nor the LXX has 'Beloved' in this passage, it does occur in St Matthew's quotation of the text (xii 18), *Ἰδοὺ ὁ παῖς μου ὃν ᾑρέτισα, ὁ ἀγαπητός μου ὃν εὐδόκησεν ἡ ψυχή μου.*[1]

In the light of these Old Testament parallels we must regard the title 'the Son of God' in this connexion as properly Messianic; and we are not now concerned with its strictly theological import. It suggested primarily 'the king set upon the holy hill of Sion' of the previous verse of the Psalm, and 'the servant of Jehovah' spoken of in the book of Isaiah. Thus not triumph only, but suffering also may have come into view when the divine proclamation was pondered in the desert. We might conjecture, even if we did not otherwise know, that the temptation which followed, and which is so briefly recorded by St Mark, would connect itself in some way with the divine announcement of the Messianic sonship (compare Matt. and Luke, 'If Thou be the Son of God').

2. The demoniac in the synagogue of Caper-

[1] By a curious mistake of the Latin translator we find *dilectus* for *electus* in the Targum on Isa. xlii 1 (Le Jay and Walton).

naum cries (i 24): 'I know Thee, who Thou art, the holy one of God' (ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ). That this also must have been recognised as a Messianic title appears from John vi 69. Our Lord checks the confession as 'coming inopportunely, and from unholy lips' (Swete, *ad loc.*). Compare i 34, 'He suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ' (where, however, some important MSS. omit χριστὸν εἶναι). Compare also v 7, when the Gerasene demoniac cries: 'What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Son of God most high?'

3. When He is rejected 'in His own country,' He is content to speak of Himself as 'a prophet,' who fails, according to the proverb, to get His due in His own home (vi 4). The conjectures as to His personality mentioned in vi 14 ff. include John the Baptist, Elijah, and 'a prophet as one of the prophets,' but not the Messiah. On the journey northward, however, He directly calls the attention of the twelve to Himself and His mission; and after they have enumerated the conjectures of the people already referred to, Peter replies on behalf of the disciples, 'Thou art the Christ' (viii 29). Silence is thereupon enjoined. We need not infer that then for the first time His Messiahship had been recognised by His disciples; but rather that He would make sure that they had grasped this lesson before He led them on to a more difficult one.

4. Now follows the mysterious announcement (viii 31) that 'the Son of Man (an expression which has been used twice before, ii 10, 28) must

suffer and be killed and rise again.' Peter, at least, recognises that He speaks of Himself.

The words which follow are directed to more than the immediate circle of disciples; they proclaim a general law of suffering and death for those who will follow Him. But they also speak of a time when 'the Son of Man' will come 'in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.' This is the first time that St Mark uses the word 'Father' in reference to God. God is the Father of the Son of Man. So that the Son of Man is declared to be also the Son of God. The Messianic significance of the whole teaching is enforced by the promise that some of those who hear shall see before they die 'the kingdom of God having come in power.'

5. The Transfiguration reaffirms the divine proclamation of the Messianic sonship given to the Lord Himself at the Baptism, and makes it authoritatively known to the disciples (ix 7): 'This is My Son, the Beloved: hear Him' (*Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός*). They are bidden to observe silence until 'the Son of Man is risen from the dead'—an expression which they cannot understand, and which presently leads to a declaration that the sufferings of 'the Son of Man' are foretold in the Scriptures.

6. A consciousness of divine mission is expressed in the words (ix 37): 'Whosoever receiveth Me, receiveth not Me, but Him that sent Me.' Presently follows the saying, 'For there is no one who shall do a miracle in My name, and shall be able lightly to speak evil

of Me.' A comment on the 'name' may be gathered from the succeeding saying: 'Whosoever shall give you to drink a cup of water in the name that ye are Christ's' (*ἐν ὀνόματι ὅτι χριστοῦ ἐστέ*). This is the first place in which *χριστός* is found on our Lord's lips in St Mark.

7. In reply to the rich man's form of address, *Διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ*, our Lord says, *Τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν; οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός* (x 18). He challenges the apparently unconsidered epithet. The man had come as to a human teacher, and our Lord took him on his own ground. It may be noted that to St Matthew the words seemed open to misunderstanding, and that he has sought to bring out the general teaching of the passage in another way (xix 16 f.): *Διδάσκαλε, τί ἀγαθὸν ποίησω; . . . Τί με ἐρωτᾷς περὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ; εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ ἀγαθός.*

8. In reply to James and John, our Lord indicates a subordination of His Messianic kingship to Another who is not expressly mentioned (x 40): *τὸ δὲ καθίσαι ἐκ δεξιῶν μου ἢ ἐξ εὐωνύμων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν δοῦναι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἡτοίμασται.* Then follows a declaration of the principle of service in the life of 'the Son of Man' (x 45).

9. Twice the blind man near Jericho invokes 'the Son of David' (x 47 f.). Christ does not comment on this form of address, which presently is exchanged for '*Ραββουνεί*. But we note that the appeal to the Messiahship has been publicly made, and in response He has 'opened the blind eyes.'

10. The next incident shews Him claiming the Messianic position, not by words, but by significant action. The disciples and others recognise the meaning of the action, and cry, *Ὡσαννά· Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυριού· Εὐλογημένη ἡ ἐρχομένη βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Δαυείδ· Ὡσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις* (xi 9 f.). The cleansing of the temple is a further assertion of this claim. When His authority is challenged, He implicitly claims that it is not inferior to that of the Baptist; and by a parable He indirectly points to Himself as higher than a servant commissioned to bear a message—as no less than the *υἱὸς ἀγαπητός* of the lord of the vineyard. Then by way of enforcing His claim He quotes the saying about 'the stone which the builders rejected' (xii 10).

11. Later on He asks a question which seems to challenge the current conception of the Messiah (xii 35 f.): 'How say the scribes that the Christ is the son of David? . . . David himself calleth Him Lord, and whence is He his son?'

12. In private He warns the disciples against some who will come in His name and say, 'I am He' (xiii 6); against others who will say, 'Lo, here is the Christ: lo, there'; and generally against *ψευδόχριστοι* and *ψευδοπροφῆται* (*vv.* 21 f.) He promises that after a time of great affliction men 'shall see the Son of Man coming' as He was represented in Daniel's vision (*v.* 26). But of the day and the hour not even 'the Son' (here contrasted with the angels) knoweth, but only 'the Father' (*v.* 32).

13. At the Last Supper He declares that 'the Son of Man goeth as it is written concerning Him,' but that this does not affect the responsibility of those who cause His sufferings (xiv 21). Then in full view of death He gives to His disciples His 'Body' and His 'Blood of the Covenant, which is poured forth on behalf of many'; and declares that He will next drink wine 'in the kingdom of God' (*vv.* 22 ff.).

14. In the Garden He prays (xiv 35 f.) 'that, if it is possible, the hour may pass from Him.' The divine sonship is the ground at once of prayer and of submission; 'Abba, Father, all things are possible to Thee: take away this cup from Me: yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt.' The words subsequently addressed to Simon Peter are not to be so limited as though they could have no reference to the Lord's own human experience: *τὸ μὲν πνεῦμα πρόθυμον, ἡ δὲ σάρξ ἀσθενής.*

15. In answer to the direct question of the high priest, *Σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ εὐλογητοῦ*; 'Jesus said, I am' (xiv 61 f.) 'The Son of the Blessed' was the accepted paraphrase of 'the Son of God,' and this in turn was a recognised title of the Messiah. Our Lord expressly accepts it; but He goes on at once to speak of 'the Son of Man' who shall be seen 'sitting on the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven.' 'Ye have heard the blasphemy,' is the high priest's reply (*v.* 64). 'The blasphemy in this case is the claim to Messianic honours and powers, which is assumed to be groundless' (Swete, *ad loc.*).

16. Pilate's question takes a different form, though to Jewish ears its meaning was the same: 'Art Thou the King of the Jews?' Our Lord's reply is, 'Thou sayest,' and no further response is given (xv 2). The title 'King of the Jews' occurs five times (*vv.* 2, 9, 12, 18, 26) in connexion with the Roman governor and soldiery; whereas the high priests say (*v.* 32) 'the Christ, the King of Israel.'

17. St Mark gives the words of but one cry from the Cross—the first verse of the twenty-second Psalm; though he mentions the uttering of another cry at the moment of death (xv 34, 37).

18. The language of the centurion (xv 39) is not to be connected with the Messianic title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ. It was the natural expression of a Roman's recognition of more than human greatness in the sufferer: Ἀληθῶς οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος υἱὸς θεοῦ ἦν, that is to say, 'This man was divine.' The dignity of the sufferer's bearing, together with what seemed the sympathy of nature with His suffering, is sufficient to explain the centurion's words. So through Gentile lips at the close we learn something more of the meaning of a title, which might have remained for Jews a Messianic phrase and nothing more. Not office, but nature—a divine relation and not merely a divine commission—lies at the root of the title ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ.

We may now sum up what we have learned from St Mark's narrative.

(*a*) *The Son of God.* The divine sonship proclaimed at the Baptism is primarily Messianic, and the terms of its proclamation recall at once the Davidic kingship and the prophetic figure of 'the servant of Jehovah.' In the Messianic sense the demoniacs acknowledge this divine sonship; and it is authoritatively proclaimed to the principal disciples at the Transfiguration. 'The Son of Man' is in one passage spoken of as standing in the relation of Son to God 'His Father.' 'The Son' is once spoken of in relation to 'the Father,' each term being used absolutely. The high priest draws from our Lord the assertion of the Messianic sonship, and then pronounces His claim to be blasphemous. The centurion at the Cross confesses a divine sonship in general terms and with no Messianic reference.

(*b*) *The Son of David.* The blind man at Jericho invokes our Lord's aid by this title, and is not refused. 'The kingdom of our father David' occurs in the acclamation of the disciples at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. But our Lord raises a question as to the propriety of the title 'the Son of David,' as used by the scribes.

(*c*) *The Son of Man.* Do we gain from our inquiry any light as to the sense in which our Lord employed the title 'the Son of Man'?

1. In view of the postponement of the public assertion of the Messianic claim, it is clear that our Lord did not intend by His public use of this title to convey the idea that He Himself was the Messiah.

2. To those only who already recognised His

Messiahship did He give the teaching of the sufferings to befall 'the Son of Man.' In like manner His assertion of the Messiahship before the high priest preceded His proclamation of the glory of 'the Son of Man.'

3. Thus the title 'the Son of Man' seems to lie in our Lord's mind close to the Messianic title, 'the Son of God.' Each title appears to have contained for Him a higher meaning than it had for others.

For the title 'the Son of God,' as a designation of the Messiah, meant to the Jewish mind no more than the embodiment in a single representative individual of the divine sonship of the people of Israel. It was in this sense that the Messiah was 'the Son of God.' But our Lord shews a consciousness of a deeper meaning of divine sonship; as, for example, in the ascending series contained in the words, 'None knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.'

Likewise the expression 'the Son of Man' contained a lower and a higher possibility of meaning. To the ordinary Jewish ear it signified simply 'the man,' or absolutely 'Man.' This sense brings out at least a part of the meaning, and indeed an essential part, of some of the earlier sayings which contain the expression. But when it is set beside another popular designation of the Messiah, 'the Son of David,' the significance of the new term springs into light. The title 'the Son of David' involved an obvious limitation: it confined His representative char-

acter to the people of Israel. 'The Son of Man,' on the contrary, is the one possible and in the circumstances the natural designation of the Christ of Humanity.

It is not, then, unreasonable to suppose that, in view of the current designations of Messiah as 'the Son of God' and 'the Son of David,' our Lord should have determined to accept the one, as true in the highest sense as well as in its ordinary interpretation; and practically to reject the other as involving a misleading limitation, substituting for it the wider designation, 'the Son of Man'—a term which for the uninstructed would be not altogether meaningless, but yet a parable of which the full interpretation could only be given by Himself.

We thus bring the term 'the Son of Man' into relation with the two terms to which it presents an obvious contrast—'the Son of God,' 'the Son of David.' The title 'the Son of Man' stands out sharply over against the title 'the Son of God,' when the latter is lifted to the height of its meaning; and serves to emphasise the perfect humanity side by side with the perfect divinity of our Lord. And, again, the title 'the Son of Man' supersedes the title 'the Son of David,' and expresses our Lord's representative relation to the whole human race.

By adopting this line we avoid the necessity of laying stress on the isolated phrase of the vision of Daniel, which is naturally enough pressed into service when the title 'the Son of Man' has on other grounds been adopted, but

which by reason of its vagueness ('one like unto a son of man') hardly offers a sufficient explanation of the definite designation, 'the Son of Man.'

We may now take three of the most striking passages which belong to the group in which the expression 'the Son of Man' is not connected either with the coming sufferings or with the future glory of Christ, and in which the essential meaning of the term must explain its presence.

(1) The earliest instance which St Mark gives is in ii 10. The scribes have challenged His action in declaring the forgiveness of sins: 'Who can forgive sins but God only?' We can conceive that, had He been willing to proclaim His Messianic position, He might have replied that 'the Son of God' had authority so to act in His Father's name. Indeed, the passage has commonly been taken as though this were actually the title used, or as though a claim of divinity were implicitly put forward. It is in striking contrast to this that we read the words, 'that ye may know that the Son of Man hath authority to forgive sins upon the earth.' It was no claim of divinity, no claim even of Messiahship, which was thus put forward. It is not as 'the Son of God,' but as 'the Son of Man' that He claims thus to act.

To us the force of this claim is apparent, when we have seen that the title denotes a relation to humanity as such. But what meaning can He have intended to convey to those who heard Him speak? They must at least have gathered that

He claimed (and supported His claim by an act of miraculous healing) that the proposition of the scribes was untrue, and that not God only, but in certain cases man also, could forgive sins. The exact meaning of the definite title they might miss: what they would learn to their astonishment was that there could be a case in which a 'son of man' could exercise this power.

(2) The next example in St Mark is in ii 28. The Lord replies to a charge of allowing His disciples to transgress a rabbinical precept concerning the Sabbath. He does not, as He might have done, denounce the frivolity of the minute regulations with which the Rabbis had overlaid the simple command of the Decalogue. He goes to the heart of the matter, and justifies the liberty taken by His disciples by the liberty accorded by David to his men under the pressure of hunger. Had He wished to assert His Messiahship, He might have gone on to claim as 'the Son of David' a right to act as David acted. The answer would have been complete.

But He will neither assert His Messiahship nor yet rest content with the precedent He has quoted, even though it contains an important principle. He goes on to proclaim that principle in the widest terms. He speaks not as 'the Son of David,' but as 'the Son of Man.' 'The Sabbath,' He says, 'was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath: so that the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.'

Here again the precise significance of the words '*the* Son of Man' may have been a mystery to

them; but the general sense of the reply cannot have been otherwise than plain: man is not to be made the slave of that which was ordained to serve him.

(3) Our third instance is from the non-Marcan document, Luke ix 58, Matt. viii 20. In reply to one who had said, 'I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest,' our Lord declares that 'foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.' If we substitute for a moment the first personal pronoun, so as to read, 'but I have not where to lay My head,' we feel how grievously the force of the saying is diminished. The point of the words lies in the contrast between the lower animals and man.

On the other hand, the meaning rises into clearer light when we remind ourselves of the words of the eighth Psalm:—

> What is man that thou art mindful of him?
> Or the son of man that thou visitest him?
>
> . . . . .
>
> Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;
>
> . . . . .
>
> The beasts of the field, the birds of the air. . . .

So that the saying contains the paradox that he who should rule is inferior to the creatures of his dominion. To the would-be disciple this would at least be clear for that 'son of man' who was speaking to him. To us He speaks as 'the Son of Man,' who in His representative character descends to bear the burden of the race.

These three examples guide us to the explanation of the fact, so remarkable in itself, that our Lord should have chosen again and again to use the third person in speaking of Himself. It is important to notice that He never does so except with the object of introducing this particular expression.[1] There is no indication whatever that He preferred an indirect method of alluding to Himself. In these three instances the first person could not be substituted without weakening, if not destroying, the meaning of the sayings. In other words, the use of the designation 'the Son of Man' is always of the nature of an argument. The statement would in each case remain true if the first person were substituted; but its scope would be limited, or its appropriateness would disappear.

It may be safely said that wherever the words 'the Son of Man' can be securely traced back to our Lord's own utterance, and are not the editorial insertion of St Matthew or St Luke, the full meaning of the passage will only appear when this expression receives its proper value. Where He predicts His sufferings He reminds us that it is as 'the Son of Man' that He will suffer; where He foretells His glory, He foretells it as the glory of 'the Son of Man.' Wherever He uses the term He speaks not for Himself alone, but for 'man,' whom He has 'taken upon Him-self, to deliver him.'

[1] Except perhaps in such passages as refer to 'the Son' absolutely.

CHAPTER III

THE GREAT SERMON IN ST MATTHEW AND ST LUKE

We have been proceeding on the hypothesis that our St Mark lay before the writers of the first and third Gospels, and that between them they embodied almost the whole of it, modifying its language at many points, and adding largely to it from other sources of information. We have accepted this as offering a better working theory than the alternative hypothesis that each of the three writers was using a document which is now lost. That indeed is a perfectly reasonable theory in itself. We can understand that a document of which almost every portion had been embodied in completer works should appear to have lost its value, and accordingly should no longer be copied. In fact, as we have already said, our St Mark itself ran some risk of perishing from this very cause. I now propose to say something of a document which has, as a matter of fact, completely disappeared, and can only be

reconstructed by critical methods from the Gospels of St Matthew and St Luke.

You may gain some general idea of the scope of this document by underlining in St Luke's Gospel all those portions which are to be found in St Matthew, but are not to be found in St Mark. Fragments of this matter may require a different explanation, but the main body of it, whether discourse or narrative, appears to be derived from a Greek document which is now entirely lost. A minute study of small points of language and style suggests that a number of the passages which thus come before us proceed from the same author, and this is the reason why I speak of one document, and not of two or more; but the whole of this subject requires a much fuller investigation than it has yet received.

I would here put in a warning, which is sorely needed, against the confusion introduced by the attempt to give this lost document a name. It is true that the characteristic feature which distinguishes it from St Mark's Gospel is that it contains a very large amount of discourse and a comparatively small amount of narrative. Now Papias, as we have already seen, writing in the

first half of the second century, says that 'Matthew composed the oracles of the Lord in the Hebrew tongue'; and the word which he uses for 'oracles' is *logia*, the primary meaning of which is 'sayings.' But it is the word which St Paul uses in Rom. iii 2, when he says of the Jews that 'to them were committed the oracles of God'; and in the technical meaning of inspired scriptures it is found in both Jewish and Christian writers. We need have no hesitation in saying that when Papias spoke of 'the oracles of the Lord' he meant simply 'the scriptures about the Lord,' or, in other words, the Gospel. But because *logia* originally meant 'sayings,' and because in St Matthew's Gospel we have a large amount of teaching uttered by our Lord, many persons have hastily concluded that Papias knew of a book of *logia* or sayings of the Lord, which consisted of discourses, and from which the writer of our first Gospel largely drew. That, however, is a guess—and, I think, a bad guess—based on the misunderstanding of the usage of a Greek word. We have no evidence that there ever was a book entitled *Logia*, and to apply this name to the document which we are considering is to beg

the question and prejudice our study. We must be content to speak of our lost document as the non-Marcan Greek document which was used by St Matthew and St Luke. *Logia* is a question-begging name: I could wish that we might hear no more of it in this connexion.

It is time to return from this troublesome but necessary digression. Nothing is more striking in regard to the earlier part of St Mark's Gospel than his reticence as to our Lord's teaching. We are told what He did, and we are told what He said in brief conversations which arose out of the remarkable things which He did; but we are not told in what His teaching consisted. It would seem as though at the outset He was stimulating hope, drawing men's eyes to Himself as the centre of their expectations, promising to supply all needs and fulfilling His promise by marvellous works of healing, but not systematically expounding a new law of life. After the ministry in Galilee has proceeded for some time we read of vast multitudes gathering by the shore of the lake, and we are told that He taught them many things. But our anxiety to know what His teaching was is still disappointed. A few parables from nature

and from human life are given us; but we are expressly told that they were not explained to the multitude; and the explanation of one of them, given to the disciples in private, only points to the different effects of His teaching on different kinds of hearers: we have not yet learned what that teaching was. But when we turn to the Galilean ministry in St Matthew we find a startling contrast: we have three long chapters of systematic discourse before we get the details of a single miracle. Moreover, when we examine this discourse, we find still further cause for surprise. In St Mark's Gospel we can trace the gradual development of the situation which leads to the ultimate denunciation of the Pharisees: but our Lord is very gentle with them at the outset; He treats them with sympathy, and tries to explain to them the reasons which move Him to do the things which cause them not unnatural offence. The discourse in St Matthew, however, suggests that a breach with the Pharisees has already taken place and that they are finally alienated and condemned. 'Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of

heaven:' that is a terrible indictment of the leaders of religious life; it must have seemed a paradox to those who heard it first. And a little later on we have yet greater severity, when the methods of Pharisaic righteousness are denounced, and in their almsgiving, their prayers, and their fasting, they are declared to be worldlings and hypocrites.

We are thus being prepared for the suggestion that St Matthew, who, as I have said before, delights to group his materials according to subject, has chosen to prefix to his narrative of the Galilean ministry a mass of teaching, part of which, at any rate, clearly belongs to a later period of the story. It may well be that as he read St Mark's Gospel he felt the lack of precise statement as to our Lord's teaching of which we have spoken, and thought it left the way open to a serious misunderstanding of our Lord's mission; and accordingly desired to let a clear exposition of the character of the teaching precede the rupture with the recognised teachers of the day. And this is the more likely as he plainly was writing for Jewish readers, and was anxious to shew the true relation of our Lord to the past, and to indicate that while His teach-

ing was progressive it was not revolutionary in the bad sense of that word; that He came to fulfil, not to destroy; that evolution rather than revolution was the underlying principle of His mission. However this may be, we face the fact that St Matthew does introduce a mass of teaching before he draws the portrait of our Lord in His daily life. For a parallel to this method we may turn to St Luke's Gospel, where in the fourth chapter we read of a discourse at Nazareth in which our Lord claims at the outset of His work to be anointed of God as a prophet of blessing. We are not given the sermon, but only the text, and then the remarkable words of practical application which led to His hasty and heartless rejection.

But for a parallel to the actual words of St Matthew's great sermon we must look later on in St Luke. In his sixth chapter we find a discourse, almost the whole of which is to be discovered in St Matthew's Sermon on the Mount. Let us very briefly analyse this discourse (Luke vi 20–49). It begins with four beatitudes followed by four woes. These are not beatitudes of character as in St Matthew, but of condition —the poor, the hungry, the sad, and the outcast

are blessed: similarly the woes are pronounced on the rich, the full, the merry, and the popular. Then we have the law of love introduced by the words, 'But I say unto you that hear.' It is contrasted with the lower standard of ordinary morals, and enforced by the example of God Himself, who is kind to the thankless and wicked: 'Be merciful as your Father is merciful, and judge not and ye shall not be judged.' Then we have a few lines which do not appear in the Sermon on the Mount, but are partly found in Matt. xv (the blind leader) and in Matt. x (the disciple not above the master). Then follow the mote and the beam, the good tree and the bad, the good and evil treasures; and the discourse ends with the warning 'Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord?' and the parable of the good builder and the bad.

It hardly seems reasonable to doubt that this discourse is the same as that of which St Matthew gives us a greatly expanded account in chaps. v-vii. Moreover, the setting of the discourse presents marked similarities. In each case vast multitudes have gathered away from the town in the hill district. In St Luke the close of the discourse is marked by the words, 'When He had fulfilled

all these sayings in the ears of the people, He entered into Capernaum'; in St Matthew by the words, 'And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these words.' This is a formula which is characteristic of St Matthew's Gospel, and recurs in xi 1, xiii 53, xix 1, xxvi 1, at the close of great groups of teaching: its wording may be in part derived from Deut. xxxi 1, 24 (LXX). What is still more remarkable, the narrative sequel is in each case the same, when we have made allowance for a small insertion in St Matthew. For in St Luke the entry into Capernaum after the sermon is immediately followed by the healing of the centurion's slave, an incident not recorded by St Mark; and in St Matthew we find exactly the same order, when we remove the healing of the leper, which he has taken over from St Mark in spite of its belonging to quite a different position in that Gospel.

We shall assume for the purposes of study that St Luke gives us the main outline of the sermon which was delivered on this occasion, and that St Matthew has for a special purpose worked into it other groups of teaching, partly peculiar to him, and partly to be found in quite different contexts in St Luke's Gospel. If we adopt the opposite

hypothesis and assume that St Matthew records one actual discourse, then we are thrown into the utmost perplexity in regard to St Luke; for many of these great teachings are attributed by him to distinct occasions, so that he would appear guilty of serious mistakes, if as a matter of fact they were all parts of a great sermon delivered at one time, and that time the very outset of the Galilean ministry. It is obviously more reasonable to suppose that St Matthew, whose habit it is to group incidents and teachings of a like character, has drawn together for a special purpose a number of utterances, the original occasions of which are to be sought for in St Luke.

We must confine our attention now to a few notable examples of the way in which St Matthew has dealt with the original discourse. He maintains the great principle of its structure, which makes it the model of a true sermon. It opens with hope, it proceeds to requirement, and it closes with warning. The beatitudes appear in St Matthew in a modified and enlarged form, and without the corresponding woes. We cannot tell what source, if any, he drew upon in making changes of this kind; we can but observe the facts. There are seven beatitudes, not of con-

dition, but of character; not 'the poor' and not 'the hungry,' but 'the poor in spirit' and 'they that hunger and thirst after righteousness' are pronounced blessed. There is one blessing of condition, that namely which, as in St Luke, is pronounced upon sufferers for the truth.[1] The function of the disciples in the world as its salt and its light is not described in St Luke's sermon; but this language has some parallels in other parts of his Gospel and in St Mark. Then comes the proclamation that the new life shall not fall short of the old, but shall in every way surpass it. The watchword of the rest of this chapter is 'more.' The old is taken up into the new, interpreted and extended, fulfilled but not destroyed. This section is not in St Luke. But in the middle of it (Matt. v 25, 26) we find a passage which St Luke gives in his twelfth chapter (*vv.* 58, 59) about agreeing with an adversary quickly. It has an external similarity to the command to be reconciled with the offended brother (Matt. v 23, 24), and this may account for its insertion by St

[1] This beatitude is given first in a general form, and then, as in St Luke, as directly addressed to the disciples. In the general form it includes the word 'righteousness,' which occurs seven times in Matthew, never in Mark, and only once in Luke (i 75).

Matthew at this point; but it breaks the natural flow of the discourse, which contrasts the old precepts and the new. The climax of this passage is the law of love, enforced by the heavenly Father's treatment of the evil and the good, the just and the unjust. If we pass over, for the moment, the whole of the sixth chapter and read the beginning of chap. vii immediately after the end of chap. v, we connect this passage, as it is closely connected in St Luke, with the command not to judge—that is, not to attempt with our inferior powers of sight to mark out men for different treatment as we think them good or bad.

But the sixth chapter, when looked at by itself, presents some points of peculiar interest. It deals with two great topics: first, the positive duties of the practical religious life, and secondly, the liberation of the religious life from the anxieties which threaten to render it impossible. In regard to these two topics two great restraining and ruling thoughts are suggested: first, the Father's reward, and secondly, the Father's care. These are the correctives to the perpetual intrusion of the world, which strikes at religion by offering itself as the rewarder of religious actions, and again by seeking to crowd religion out by

means of the anxieties which attend both riches and poverty.

With the first only of these sections can we deal at any length. I wish you to observe the exact parallelism and perfect balance of the little sermon which is here preserved to us, and which I cannot but think must at one time have had a separate existence of its own. Righteousness, which is here used as a general term to describe the great practical actions by which religion manifests itself, falls under three heads—alms, prayer, and fasting. These three concern the soul in its relation to its neighbour, to God, and to itself: as it looks around, above, and within. Service of others, communion with God, discipline of self—into the typical manifestations of all of these the world tries to creep, asserting for itself the position of 'rewarder' which belongs to God alone (comp. Heb. xi 6). If you read consecutively Matt. vi 1–6 and 16–18, substituting the word 'righteousness' for 'alms' in *v.* 1, according to the true text, you observe at once the balance and the symmetry. In each case the world's reward is contrasted with the Father's reward. By omitting *vv.* 7–15 we have restored the little discourse to its integrity, which had

been broken because the writer of St Matthew's Gospel could not be content with speaking of prayer and not giving us its true model and warning us against another false spirit which renders prayer unfruitful. He has added (1) the Lord's Prayer, and (2) a particular justification of one of its clauses. The first of these additions is found in St Luke's Gospel (xi 2 ff.) in a wholly different context, as the answer to a request of the disciples; the second corresponds in great part to Mark xi 25 f., from which it seems to have been brought into this connexion.

Nearly the whole of the second part of the sixth chapter, which deals with the relation of the religious life to worldly cares, is found in Luke xii, where it stands in connexion with the request to divide the inheritance and the parable of the rich fool. Into the seventh chapter we cannot enter now; but when we similarly compare and contrast it with the sermon in Luke vi, many points of interest and instruction are revealed.

To sum up and reconstruct: a common narrative seems to have lain before St Matthew and St Luke, containing the record of a sermon delivered in presence of a large crowd somewhere

on the high ground above the lake. It commenced with beatitudes, probably followed by woes. It proclaimed a new law of universal love; appealing to the example of the mercifulness of the divine Father in His treatment of just and unjust alike; and forbidding men to judge one another and to attempt distinctions in their treatment of man and man[1]; for the judge may have a beam of timber in his eye, while the judged has only a tiny speck. It concluded with a warning that the fruit was the proof of the tree, and that professions of loyalty were vain without obedience; and it emphasised the warning by the parable of the two builders. Thus the discourse was brought to a formal close — 'the sayings were finished'—and the entry into Capernaum was immediately followed by the healing of the centurion's slave.

The most substantial additions which the writer of St Matthew's Gospel made were the elaborate expansion of the old law in chap. v, and the insertion of the whole of chap. vi, the first part of which deals with the three great precepts of practical righteousness, the second with the rela-

[1] So 'mercy rejoiceth against judgment' (James ii 13).

tion of the disciples to worldly cares. Probably the first section of chap. vi had once a separate existence as a whole in itself, if we leave out of account certain apparent additions. The general principle was laid down that righteousness done to be seen of men will not be rewarded by the Father. This principle was applied to alms-giving, prayer, and fasting. Of each of these there is a false and a true. 'Be not as the hypocrites; they have their reward: conceal thy good deed: the Father which seeth in secret will reward thee.' In each of the three instances the same phrases occur: the symmetry is only broken by the interpolation, which follows the precept concerning prayer, of a fresh warning not to be like the heathen vainly babbling, followed by the Lord's Prayer as the true formula, and a few words by way of emphasising the clause about forgiveness. The little discourse, the symmetry of which we have thus restored, might well have seemed suitable to be placed immediately after the expansion of the old law in chap. v; for it reasserts the contrast between the old life and the new, although the terms used are of a very different character. In chap. v the old is treated as divine teaching, and the new as

only its interpretation and fulfilment; but in chap. vi the old is regarded from the standpoint of its present practice, and those who represent it in actual life are denounced as hypocrites: in this respect it stands in the sharpest contrast with the new as it is to be practised by the sons of the Father.

I have been endeavouring to treat one portion of that lost Greek document which appears to lie behind the Gospels of St Matthew and St Luke in those places where they are in close agreement, and where St Mark's Gospel offers us nothing to explain that agreement. I have sought to indicate a method of study by which you may be able further to reconstruct this lost document for yourselves. I shall return to the subject later on, but here I must say a word as to the general result of our examination of the portion of St Matthew's Gospel with which we have had occasion to deal. We are accustomed to regard the Sermon on the Mount as an integral discourse, the stateliest and at the same time the profoundest exposition of the principles of the religious life which can anywhere be found in the whole range of literature. And we are right in so doing. The

evangelist has, we believe, been divinely guided in his selection and arrangement of these great sections, and in his presentation of them as a systematic exposition of the teaching of our Lord. We cannot fail to be instructed by the most careful study of the whole as he has given it to us. Our present inquiry, however, has been a historical and literary inquiry. We have sought to learn the history of the elements which he has combined for us. We have therefore been compelled to analyse. And our analysis has this at least to justify it, that it reveals to us clear traces of an earlier record, lying behind St Matthew and St Luke, and nearer to the actual moment (who shall say how much nearer?) when our Lord spoke in human flesh to men. Such an inquiry, reverently made, cannot lessen, but must rather increase, our regard for the final form in which the divine Spirit fixed these great utterances for the permanent instruction of the Church. It is in this final form that they lay claim to the allegiance of our lives. In this form they appeal to us with the irrefragable sanction of their own inherent power, which reaches our hearts and commands our consciences. In this

form they come to us with the whole authority of the universal Church, which through the centuries has recognised them as the standard of her teaching and the rule of her children's lives.

CHAPTER IV

THE USE OF THE NON-MARCAN DOCUMENT BY ST MATTHEW AND ST LUKE

We have seen something of the method which St Matthew has adopted in dealing with the documents which lay before him. His Sermon on the Mount gathers together sayings which in St Luke's Gospel are scattered over chaps. vi, xi, xii, xiii, and xvi, and are assigned in several cases to definite occasions on which we feel sure that they must have originally been spoken. Just the same phenomenon meets us in St Matthew's long account of the Charge to the Twelve Apostles. Here St Mark's brief charge is combined with St Luke's parallel account of the Charge to the Seventy, and with other sayings to disciples which are to be found in Mark xiii and in Luke vi, xii, xiii, xiv, and xvii. The whole of this composite charge is closed by St Matthew with a formula similar to that with which he closes the Sermon on the Mount: 'it came to pass, when Jesus had finished command-

ing His twelve disciples, He departed thence.' A like formula closes the group of parables in chap. xiii, and recurs in xix 1 and xxvi 1. It is quite clear, therefore, that St Matthew has broken up the order in which incidents and teachings stood in the documents before him, and that it is to St Luke that we must turn if we are to recover with any probability the original order of the non-Marcan source.

What then is St Luke's general method in the use and combination of his documents? Let us look first at his use of St Mark. In the main part of his book we find that he introduces it in great masses, keeping its order with very rare exceptions. Thus Luke iv 31 to vi 19 gives us 62 verses from St Mark, with only 11 inserted from another source. Then from vi 20 to viii 3 we find 83 verses with nothing of St Mark. After this come 103 verses from St Mark, viz., Luke viii 4 to ix 50; and then 351 verses with nothing from St Mark, viz., Luke ix 51 to xviii 14. At xviii 15 St Mark is taken up again almost at the old point, and is kept to for 29 verses. The latter part of the book shews greater mixture; but yet from xix 45 to xxii 14 we again have 103 verses, practically unbroken,

from St Mark.[1] It is plain that in dealing with St Mark's Gospel he for the most part adopted great masses of it, preserving its order, though making considerable omissions and largely modifying its language. But if he dealt thus with one of his documents, there is a presumption in favour of his having dealt so with another. On this hypothesis, which of course needs careful testing, we might fairly suppose that such masses as vi 20 to viii 3, and ix 51 to xviii 14, represent in the main the non-Marcan document which was used by St Luke and St Matthew.

If we look at the former of these two masses, which consists of 83 verses, we find that it is composed of the sermon, the healing of the centurion's servant, the raising of the widow's son at Nain, the coming of John's messengers and our Lord's sayings about John, the anointing by a woman in Simon's house, and a brief notice of ministering women. Now the sermon and the centurion's servant (40 verses) were undoubtedly in the non-Marcan document, and so was the whole passage (18 verses) about John the Baptist: that is

[1] We may present these figures summarily thus, beginning with Luke iv 31, and enclosing in brackets all that is not from St Mark: 14 (11) 47 (83) 103 (351) 29 . . . 103.

to say, 58 verses out of 83. What of the remaining 25 verses? It is curious that they all illustrate our Lord's tender relations to women. They thus harmonise with that sympathetic character which belongs pre-eminently to St Luke's Gospel. They are parallel to the stories which shew our Lord's interest in the Samaritans, and to those which exemplify His depreciation of the rich. It may be that St Luke gathered these stories from various sources; but it is not impossible that they may have formed a part of the document which said Woe to the rich, and pronounced blessings on the outcast and the poor.

If, however, we would reconstruct the non-Marcan document with security up to a certain point, we must leave these tempting guesses, and studiously collect all those passages of St Luke which are definitely attested by parallels from St Matthew alone. Even with this limitation we shall soon find a large document growing in our hands. Thus chap. x yields us 19 verses, chap. xi 43 verses, chap. xii 36 verses: a total of 98 out of 190, or rather more than half of the contents of these three chapters. And this includes such important sections as the instructions to disciples, the Lord's Prayer and the promises which follow

it, the controversy about Beelzebub, the woes pronounced on Pharisees, and the precepts against anxiety about material needs.

When we turn from such details to consider the general scope of the document, we may observe that it began with a record of the preaching of the Baptist, that it gave a full account of our Lord's temptation, and that, while it contained a large amount of discourse, it also gave narratives of miraculous healing, such as the cure of the centurion's servant. We can trace it, though not with the same certainty, into the last scenes of our Lord's life, and it is not unlikely that it may have given to St Luke his peculiar narrative of the institution of the Eucharist. The failure of our evidence towards the close is due to the fact that as St Matthew proceeds with his Gospel he becomes more retentive of St Mark's order. He dismembers completely the first third of St Mark: but after the great grouping of parables in chap. xiii his delight in rearrangement has exhausted itself, and from that point to the end he embodies the whole of the remainder of St Mark with but four omissions, and does not change his order, although he makes a large number of insertions at various points of the narrative. In

the final scenes he follows St Mark closely right up to the Burial, altering his phraseology indeed as before, but making few additions. The result is that, whereas St Luke's account often differs widely from St Mark, St Matthew offers us, generally speaking, no parallels which can enable us to say for certain that the non-Marcan document contained a narrative of the Crucifixion. It remains possible indeed that St Luke drew from it his very different narratives of the closing scenes; but at present, at any rate, we are not in a position to offer substantial evidence that this was so.

When from our attempt at reconstructing this lost document we pass on to describe its chief characteristics, our task is not an easy one. In the case of the other document, St Mark's Gospel, we have the whole book lying open before us, and many of its characteristics appear at once when we observe what kind of phrases St Matthew and St Luke have felt it desirable to modify or omit. Thus we see how many little details it gives, insignificant in themselves, but full of interest to those who in modern times desire to draw a vivid picture of Christ and His surroundings. We see too how often it records

strong expressions of emotion, the anger and the sighs of Christ, the ignorance and waywardness of His disciples; the very Aramaic words which fell on great occasions from His lips; or, again, the things 'He could not' do, and the apparent difficulty with which some of His miracles were wrought. But if St Mark's Gospel had perished, and we were left to a reconstruction of it by the aid of the parallels in St Matthew and St Luke, most of these traits would have entirely escaped us.

We see then that in the case of the lost non-Marcan document we must be content with a few broad characteristics. Of its narrative portions we have but one absolutely sure example, the healing of the centurion's servant, and there St Matthew appears to have greatly abbreviated the story.[1] But we have enough there and elsewhere to shew that the same general simplicity of narration prevailed as in St Mark, conversational in form and yet wonderfully succinct, depicting our Lord just as He is depicted in St Mark, as ready to relieve all distress and specially rewarding the faith of those who come to Him. In the teach-

[1] Several other passages involve more or less of narrative, as, for example, the coming of John's messengers.

ing which this document ascribes to our Lord we may note a startling use of paradox, which is sometimes softened by St Matthew. The great sermon begins at once by reversing all the ordinary canons of happiness and misery. The poor, not the rich; the hungry, not the full; the sad, not the merry; the ill-treated, not the favoured, are truly to be congratulated. Love is to be lavished on those who hate: no blow is to be returned: every beggar is to be relieved: mercy is not to discriminate between man and man: the reward of forgiving will be forgiveness, the reward of good measure will be good measure in return. This is assuredly doctrine that points to a complete reconstitution of human life, to a condition of things in which, as the same document tells us elsewhere, 'the first shall be last, and the last shall be first.' The preachers of this new state of things—'the kingdom of God' upon earth—were to be as homeless as the great Teacher Himself; they were to have no money, and yet no anxiety: one was to be pre-eminent rather than another only in proportion to his fulfilment of the lowliest services. They were to be lambs in the midst of wolves: loving all men, they were to be hated by all. They must expect

to die, as their Master would die. But 'the kingdom' would come: indeed it was already there, growing silently like a mustard seed, spreading with the secrecy of leaven. Meanwhile the world was sadly out of joint; and, mainly, because blind men were being led about by blind men. The religious leaders of the people were like tombs, decorated receptacles of dead bones: their estimate of what was important was exactly contrary to truth; while they carefully strained out a gnat, they thought nothing of swallowing a camel. They had locked up 'the kingdom of God,' and hidden the key. Accordingly, an awful conflict was impending. He was come, as the Baptist had foretold, to baptize with fire: to cast fire on the earth, before He could give the promised peace. For the moment, however, His works and words combined to proclaim that life was taking the place of death, and that humble men might hope in Him: 'the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them; and blessed is he who is not scandalised by Me.'

Almost every element of this description finds

some parallel in the Gospel of St Mark; certainly there is nothing in that Gospel which is out of harmony with it: and of course every element of it is found both in St Matthew and in St Luke, for it is from matter common to both of them that our picture has been drawn. If it seems a startling picture, it is only because in these two Gospels its elements are blended with other elements. We have tried to separate them, and so to recover something of the impression which the message of Christ made on some unknown disciple, who was one of the first to put in writing what he knew of the Lord.

Of this early record St Luke has preserved to us the most satisfactory presentation. We should like to be able to add to those fragments of it which the parallels in St Matthew attest the many stories which St Luke alone gives us, but which are in the completest harmony with the picture which we have just drawn: stories full of irony regarding the aims and standards of men; stories against the folly and false security of the rich, and stories that promise blessings to the poor and the despised, to the outcast publican and the heretic Samaritan, and to the weak women, good or bad, who came to His

feet and ministered to His comfort. They are all of a piece with the rest, and if the possibility remains that St Luke drew them from other sources, they still attest by their intrinsic fitness and by their harmony with their contexts St Luke's peculiar sympathy with the spirit of that early document. It is the same temper of mind which makes him linger with such evident delight on the story of the Holy Family, that peaceful prelude to his stirring narrative, which yet contains the prophecies of a great upheaval—of the fall of the proud and the exaltation of the humble, of the hungry filled and the rich sent empty away.

St Matthew, or whoever may have been the writer of our first Gospel, treated this early record with less favour. His sympathies were of another kind. He does not display the universality which is so marked a feature of St Luke, the disciple of St Paul, a traveller in many lands, a physician by profession, and perhaps a Gentile by birth. On the contrary, his special interests lay first in the literal fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy by Jesus as the Messiah; and secondly, in the new Christian Church, which had succeeded to the task of

representing 'the kingdom of heaven' upon earth. He begins his Gospel with a genealogy of Jesus as the Christ, 'son of David, son of Abraham.' His wonderful birth fulfils a prophecy. He is greeted by Eastern sages as king of the Jews, and the world-power in Jerusalem trembles because the birth at Bethlehem fulfils another prophecy. Hence follow the flight to Egypt, the murder of the innocents, and the return to Nazareth, not Bethlehem: each of which events fulfils a further prophecy. After this introduction we learn that John prepares the way of the Christ, in accordance with prophecy; and that, while he recognises the superiority of Jesus, yet he baptizes Him, 'to fulfil,' not prophecy this time, but 'all righteousness.' Soon after this Jesus takes leave of Nazareth and dwells in Capernaum, to fulfil another prophecy. Thus St Matthew has been justifying in advance the saying of the sermon which follows: 'Think not that I came to overthrow the law or the prophets: I came not to overthrow, but to fulfil'—to fulfil all prophecy as well as 'all righteousness.'

The mental attitude of the writer is revealed by the reiteration of the phrase, 'Now all this was

done that what was spoken by the prophet might be fulfilled.' So strong is this conviction that he sometimes tells his story under the influence of the wording of the prophecy: as when he introduces a second ass to correspond with 'the ass and the colt the foal of an ass,' of which the parallelism of Hebrew poetry had spoken (xxi 2–5); and when he interprets the 'myrrhed wine' of St Mark as 'wine mingled with gall' in view of the sixty-ninth Psalm (Matt. xxvii 34, Mark xv 23; comp. Ps. lxix 21). In like manner he interprets our Lord's reference to 'the sign of Jonah,' not simply by the repentance of the Ninevites which followed Jonah's preaching, but also by the parallel which Jonah's strange story offers to the burial and resurrection of Christ (Matt. xii 40 f.; Luke xi 30 ff.).

If the influence of the past was so strong upon him as to colour his narrative of events and to modify his representation of our Lord's own words, we need not be surprised if we find a like influence exerted by the life of the Christian society in which he moved. This influence of the living present appears to offer an explanation of the way in which he has dealt with the materials that lay before him, and especially

with the non-Marcan document. If we cannot safely assert that his grouping of teachings was directly designed to meet the needs of the Christian assembly when gathered for worship, we are certainly left with the impression that he lived in a settled community, which required a systematisation of the scattered teachings of their Master and an interpretation of some of the more startling and paradoxical of His sayings. Thus in his Gospel the mere states of poverty and hunger are no longer spoken of as blessed conditions: they are spiritualised first, and then blessed. 'The poor in spirit,' 'they that hunger and thirst after righteousness,' and other characters such as 'the meek' and 'the peaceable'—these it is that the Lord means to commend. He is at pains to show that Christ is no mere revolutionary; on the contrary, He changes by fulfilling the old. He asks for 'more righteousness,' not less: and he requires that the 'righteousness' shall be unworldly in its motive, and fulfilled with reference to the heavenly Father only: it is the Father's 'kingdom' and 'His righteousness' which alone is to be sought.

The avoidance of possible misconception is

no doubt the cause of the striking modification by which St Mark's report of our Lord's saying, 'Why callest thou Me good? there is none good save one, that is God,' appears as, 'Why askest thou Me concerning the good? He that is good is one' (Matt. xix 17; Mark x 18). So, too, it is an attempt to reach the real meaning and to make explicit what he believed to be implied, when in two separate places he inserts an excepting clause into the brief pronouncement as to divorce and subsequent marriage (Matt. xix 9, comp. Mark x 11; Matt. v 32, comp. Luke xvi 18).

As illustrating his interest in the existing Christian society we note that he is the only evangelist who records the words of our Lord in which express reference is made to the *Ecclesia*; that he modifies and slightly expands the words of the institution of the Eucharist; and that he alone gives the full formula of Baptism, for which there is no clear evidence in the rest of the New Testament. He manifests more concern than the other evangelists for forgiveness within the Christian brotherhood, and he recognises more fully the troubles of persecution, as for example in the beatitude pronounced on those 'who have

been persecuted for the sake of righteousness,' and in the requirement of prayer for persecutors.

If we ask to what extent the consideration of such modifications ought to affect our view of the historicity of St Matthew's record, we must be careful at once to draw a distinction. It is one thing gratefully to accept the authorised interpretation of our Lord's meaning and intention in sayings which had been preserved in an obscure or a paradoxical form. It is another thing to explore with the eye of the historical investigator, who seeks to trace the earliest sources and to apply the ordinary tests of literary criticism. The historian feels most secure when he has discovered the most nearly contemporary record, when the matter of one source receives confirmation from another, or when he knows that he is dealing with a narrator who gives evidence of the spirit of historical investigation. He will therefore prefer St Mark and the reconstructed non-Marcan document; and he will prefer St Luke, as an accurate writer who made it his business to collect and sift information. He cannot feel a like certainty from the historical point of view in dealing with statements which are only attested by the unknown writer

of the first Gospel. He is bound to consider how far they may have been coloured and modified by his peculiar interest in the Old Testament, and by his life and surroundings in the early Christian Church.

That the Gospel speaks its one message in various tones; that it needs to be interpreted as the fulfilment of the past and as a guide to the present—this is a spiritual lesson for each new age, and it is a lesson which underlies the difficulties and inconsistencies which meet us in the criticism of St Matthew's Gospel. It is well that we should begin to learn it here: we shall need it again and again.

NOTE C

A Comment on Matt. xi 25–30

The following study of an important passage, the first part of which is undoubtedly derived from the non-Marcan document, will help to illustrate what has been already said, and at the same time offer some fresh points of interest.

Ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν Ἐξομολογοῦμαί σοι, πάτερ κύριε τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅτι ἔκρυψας ταῦτα ἀπὸ σοφῶν καὶ συνετῶν, καὶ ἀπεκάλυψας αὐτὰ νηπίοις· ναί, ὁ πατήρ, ὅτι οὕτως εὐδοκία ἐγένετο ἔμπροσθέν σου. Πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός μου, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ, οὐδὲ τὸν πατέρα τις ἐπιγινώσκει εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ ᾧ ἐὰν βούληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψαι. Δεῦτε πρός με πάντες οἱ κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι, κἀγὼ ἀναπαύσω ὑμᾶς. ἄρατε τὸν ζυγόν μου ἐφ' ὑμᾶς καὶ μάθετε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, ὅτι πραΰς εἰμι καὶ ταπεινὸς τῇ καρδίᾳ, καὶ εὑρήσετε ἀνάπαυσιν ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν· ὁ γὰρ ζυγός μου χρηστὸς καὶ τὸ φορτίον μου ἐλαφρόν ἐστιν.

1. We begin by observing that the words *Ἐξομολογοῦμαι . . . ἀποκαλύψαι*, which constitute more than half the passage, are found in

Luke x 21 f. There is but a small variation of language at the close, where St Luke writes, *καὶ οὐδεὶς γινώσκει τίς ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ, καὶ τίς ἐστιν ὁ πατὴρ εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ ᾧ ἂν βούληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψαι.*[1] It would be possible, as we have seen, to account for a close correspondence of this kind in one of two ways: either by supposing that one of these evangelists was copying from the work of the other, or by assuming a lost Greek document which they were both using. The former explanation is shewn by a general study of the two Gospels to be highly improbable; and we fall back on the other, which is justified by the examination of many other parallel passages. That the document lay before the two evangelists in Greek is clear from the exact agreement of so many words in succession in both Gospels. This does not, of course, preclude us from supposing that the words may first of all have been written down in Aramaic; but we have no kind of proof that this was the case. It is, however, exceedingly probable on several grounds that they were originally *spoken* in the Aramaic of Galilee.[2]

2. Before we examine these words in detail, we must note the phrases by which each evangelist introduces them. St Matthew says, *Ἐν ἐκείνῳ*

[1] St Luke also has *ἀπέκρυψας* for St Matthew's *ἔκρυψας*.

[2] Professor Dalman's important book on *The Words of Jesus* is now published in English by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, price 7s. 6d. net. It is by far the best study that has appeared of the language spoken by our Lord and His disciples.

τῷ καιρῷ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν. St Luke has the remarkable sentence, Ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ ἠγαλλιάσατο τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ καὶ εἶπεν. We have already observed that St Matthew frequently takes teachings out of their context in order to group them with similar teachings. We are therefore generally safe in preferring St Luke's description of the occasion on which notable sayings were uttered. Accordingly, we ask in the present instance in what context St Luke places this passage.

The seventy disciples had returned from their mission with exultant joy. Our Lord had allowed them the experience of a complete success: 'Lord, even the devils are subject to us in Thy name.' It was no news that they brought Him: He had witnessed their victory in spirit; He had seen Satan's fall. After a promise of further powers, He adds a warning: 'Rejoice not in this, that the spirits are subject to you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.' Then by a sudden transition He turns in a kind of sacred ecstasy from earth to heaven: 'In that hour He rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said: I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth . . .'

Certain points of language may here be noted:

(i.) 'In the Holy Spirit' is the reading which has by far the best attestation; not 'in spirit,' which is found in the Received Text and followed in our Authorised Version.

(ii.) Ἠγαλλιάσατο. Compare the language of the Magnificat, καὶ ἠγαλλίασεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ σωτῆρί μου. We cannot in Eng-

lish conveniently mark the distinction between this verb and *χαίρειν*, which is used in the previous verse; 'exulted' does not quite give the sense, which, indeed, is well represented by 'rejoiced.'

(iii.) *Ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ.* In classical Greek this would mean 'at the very hour' (whereas *ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ ὥρᾳ* means 'at the same hour'). But here *αὐτὸς* is used, as it is in modern Greek, as a demonstrative pronoun, and we must translate 'in that hour.' Compare Luke x 7, *ἐν αὐτῇ δὲ τῇ οἰκίᾳ μένετε*, 'and in that house remain'; and xii 12, where *ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ* is substituted by St Luke for *ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ* of St Mark, which St Matthew has retained.[1]

3. We come now to consider the saying itself. *Ἐξομολογοῦμαι* has a twofold sense: (*a*) 'to confess,' (*b*) 'to acknowledge with gratitude or praise.' In this latter sense it is the regular rendering in the Greek version of the Psalms of הוֹדָה (the *Hiphil* of יָדָה). Here then it means not 'I confess to Thee,' but 'I thank' or 'praise Thee that,' &c.

Πάτερ κύριε τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς. 'Heaven' has been twice mentioned in the context (Luke x 18, 20); and we may further compare ver. 15 (= Matt. xi 23). The work which the disciples have been doing on earth has its counterpart in the fall of Satan from *heaven:* and, again, they are not to rejoice at the success of their work on

[1] Compare *αὐτῆς ὥρας* in *Evang. Petri*, § 5, and *Clem. Hom.* xx 16.

earth, but in the place that is assigned to them in *heaven*. Thus the vagueness of the following *ταῦτα* finds a partial explanation: the things of heaven are veiled from some and unveiled to others upon earth.

Ἔκρυψας . . . ἀπεκάλυψας. This is a good example of the quite indefinite use of the aorist. It merely suggests the past, without fixing our attention on any one point in it. If we render 'Thou didst hide . . . Thou didst reveal,' we destroy this indefiniteness, and our minds are set to search for some specially appropriate moment to which reference may be made. The familiar rendering, 'Thou hast hid . . . Thou hast revealed,' expresses the sense of the Greek far more closely, although we are using what we call a 'perfect.' The fact needs to be recognised that our simple past and our perfect tense do not exactly coincide in meaning with the Greek aorist and perfect respectively. The translation of the aorist into English must be determined partly by the context and partly by considerations of euphony. These remarks apply equally to the following verbs—*ἐγένετο* and *παρεδόθη*.

Ὁ πατήρ is here used as a vocative: compare *Ἀββά, ὁ πατήρ*. The use of the nominative with the article for the vocative is frequent in the New Testament.

Ὅτι οὕτως εὐδοκία ἐγένετο ἔμπροσθέν σου. If we translated these words literally, 'for so it was (*or* came to be) good pleasure before Thee,' we should feel that the sentence was not English. So neither, as it stands in the original, can it be called Greek.

It is obviously a literal rendering of an Aramaic original. Here, then, as often in the Gospel, we feel our way behind the Greek back to an earlier stage. The noun *εὐδοκία* occurs again in the Gospel only in the angels' song, Luke ii 14; but the verb is found in Luke xii 32, where again the thought is of the Father's supreme will: *εὐδόκησεν ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν δοῦναι ὑμῖν τὴν βασιλείαν.* Compare also the passages in which it is used in reference to our Lord Himself: at the Baptism, Mark i 11 (=Matt. iii 17, Luke iii 22), where it is in allusion to Isaiah xlii 1 (quoted in Matt. xii 18); and at the Transfiguration, Matt. xvii 5 only. The corresponding Hebrew noun רָצוֹן is rendered in the Psalms often by *εὐδοκία*, and often by *θέλημα*, as in Ps. xl 8, 'I delight to do Thy will, O God.'

Thus the entry of these weak and unlettered disciples upon the spiritual work of the kingdom of God is hailed by the Lord as the beginning of the fulfilment of the Father's will. He delights in the divine choice which has appropriated these mere 'children' as the instruments of His purpose, and has made them acquainted with the powers of the spiritual world. Note the strong contrast which gives effect to this thought. We should have thought it more natural to say, 'that, although Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, Thou hast revealed them to babes.' But the contrast has a close parallel in the preceding words, 'Rejoice not that . . . but that,' where we should have said, 'Rejoice not so much that . . . as that.'

4. The next words are not, indeed, addressed to the Father, yet neither are they spoken directly to the disciples, but rather as a solemn meditation in their hearing. They go beyond any other passage of the synoptic Gospels in their revelation of the unique relation of Christ to the Father. The occasion was exceptional: in the transport of His spirit He speaks in a mysterious monologue, to which perhaps the closest parallel is John xii 27, when the request of the Greeks, prophetic in its import, had strangely moved Him.

'All things have been delivered unto Me by My Father.' That is the explanation of this revelation 'unto babes.' Through Me to them, because He wills it, and I will it: compare *οὕτως εὐδοκία ἐγένετο ἔμπροσθέν σου* with *ᾧ ἂν βούληται ὁ υἱός*, and note the correspondence of *ἀπεκάλυψας* and *ἀποκαλύψαι*.

'The Father' and 'the Son' alone have knowledge—knowledge of each other. If 'the Father' communicates any share of knowledge to men, He does it through 'the Son.' Observe that the titles are used absolutely. We are familiar with this use from St John's Gospel. But it occurs but once again in the synoptic Gospels, namely, in Mark xiii 32 (= Matt. xxiv 36): *περὶ δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης ἢ τῆς ὥρας οὐδεὶς οἶδεν, οὐδὲ οἱ ἄγγελοι ἐν οὐρανῷ οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός, εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ.* 'The Son' here holds a position above the angels and next to 'the Father.' It is an important fact, to be borne in mind in connexion with the Christology of St John's Gospel,

that this special mode of speech is attested once for St Mark, and once also for the non-Marcan document. We could hardly have stronger evidence, from the historical point of view, that our Lord Himself did thus speak of Himself absolutely as 'the Son.' It is not necessary to explain how unique is the claim which is put forward by this language.

5. St Luke has *οὐδεὶς γινώσκει τίς ἐστιν ὁ υἱός*, whereas St Matthew has *οὐδεὶς ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν υἱόν*. The meaning is the same; for, in spite of high authority to the contrary, it appears on a careful examination of the usage of the words that *ἐπιγινώσκειν* and *ἐπίγνωσις* do not signify a 'full' or 'further knowledge.' The force of the preposition seems to be to give *direction*, so to speak, as in *ἐπιβλέπειν*, not to suggest *addition*. *Ἐπιγινώσκειν* is often used with an accusative of the person recognised, as in Acts iv 13: 'They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.' In the present passage, therefore, *ἐπιγινώσκειν* may have offered itself to St Matthew as an exact Greek equivalent for what is perhaps the more Semitic phrase—*γινώσκειν τίς ἐστιν*.

6. St Luke closes the incident as follows: 'And He turned Him unto the disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have

not heard them.' St Matthew inserts this saying immediately before the explanation of the Parable of the Sower (xiii 16 f.). There is no sufficient reason for supposing that St Luke has not preserved its original position. It is in full harmony with what has gone before. St Matthew would seem to have displaced it in order to make room for a very remarkable saying which does not occur at all in St Luke's Gospel, but which nevertheless may have stood in the non-Marcan document.

7. It is necessary at this point to take a somewhat more extended view of the context in each Gospel.

The order in St Luke is as follows: After a long section (viii 4–ix 50) drawn from St Mark's Gospel, a new beginning is made in ix 51 with the journey to Jerusalem, and there is no further extract from St Mark until we reach xviii 15. The following summary indicates the nature of the earlier part of this non-Marcan section :—

Luke		
ix 51–56	Rejection by Samaritans.	
57–60	'Foxes have holes'	= Matt. viii
	'Let the dead bury their dead'	19 ff.
61, 62	The ploughman looking back.	
x 1–12	Mission of seventy disciples	= Matt. ix 37 f., x 1 ff.
13–15	Woes on Chorazin, &c.	= Matt. xi 21 ff.
16	'He that heareth you'	= Matt. x 40.
17–20	Return of seventy.	
21, 22	'I thank Thee, Father'	= Matt. xi 25 f.
23, 24	'Blessed are the eyes'	= Matt. xiii 16.

The order in St Matthew offers us an example

of his grouping of similar sayings. Thus in ix 35–x 42 he has combined the charge to the twelve (Mark vi 7 ff.) with the charge to the seventy, which St Luke gives separately; and he has woven in many sayings which are found scattered in St Mark and St Luke. He closes this collection of sayings with the words: 'And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished commanding His twelve disciples, He departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities' (xi 1). Then follows the question of the Baptist and our Lord's comment on the Baptist's work (xi 2–19), which occurs at a much earlier point in St Luke (vii 18–35). Next comes the woes on Chorazin, &c. (= Luke x 13 ff.); then the passage which we have been considering, 'I thank Thee, Father' (=Luke x 21, 22); and then the words which we have still to examine, 'Come unto Me.' After this St Matthew draws again upon St Mark's Gospel for the controversy about the Sabbath (Matt. xii 1–15 = Mark ii 23 ff., iii 1 ff.).

8. Accordingly, we see that we cannot lay much stress on the order of passages in St Matthew's Gospel. If the words 'Come unto Me' had stood in the non-Marcan document immediately after the great passage which we have just considered, it is not easy to suggest a reason for their omission by St Luke. They may have stood in another part of that document in connexion with some incident which St Luke had no occasion to record.

And yet we may observe a spiritual appropri-

ateness which justifies the position in which we find them in St Matthew. The universality of the invitation stands in notable contrast to the apparent exclusiveness of the words which precede it. Is it so, indeed, that the wise and prudent cannot by searching find out God? and is 'the Son,' who alone has knowledge of 'the Father,' removed by so infinite a distance from common men? These sublime sayings might crush us in despair at the impotence of man in his effort to rise to a knowledge of God. 'He that sitteth on high,' we might be tempted to say, 'laugheth us to scorn. He dismisses the wisest with contempt, as more ignorant than babes. And the Son, who alone knows Him, and to whom all things are entrusted by the Father, only reveals Him to whom He will.' Yet the great Teacher will not discourage; He has a lesson for all, and He bids all who are conscious of need come and learn it of Him.

9. We may next observe that in these words, even more plainly than in the preceding, we can discern the Aramaic original which underlies them, and can appeal to it to throw light on their interpretation. Two points deserve our attention:—

(*a*) *Εὑρήσετε ἀνάπαυσιν ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν.* That this is a Hebraistic expression is clear from its actual occurrence in Jer. vi 16: 'Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your

souls.'[1] If the expression were originally Greek, we should be justified in laying stress on the word 'soul.' In this case, however, we must remember that a Semitic language has no word for 'self,' and naturally says 'his soul' where we should say 'himself.' Thus, for example, when the Syriac has to render 'a kingdom divided against itself,' in Mark iii 24, it says 'a kingdom divided against its soul.'[2] Accordingly, when we read the phrase 'unto your souls' in the Syriac version, we feel at once that its most natural meaning is 'unto yourselves.' We shall presently see how this helps to bring out the force of the passage.

(*b*) *κἀγὼ ἀναπαύσω ὑμᾶς . . . μάθετε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, ὅτι πραΰς εἰμι . . . καὶ εὑρήσετε ἀνάπαυσιν ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν.* Here in the Greek the root which signifies 'rest' is twice employed, first in the verb, and secondly in the noun. But when we read the passage in the Syriac version, which represents a sister dialect of the Aramaic of Galilee, we find the root which signifies 'rest' occurring three

[1] The LXX has *εὑρήσετε ἁγνισμὸν* (or, *ἁγιασμὸν*) *ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν*. The Hebrew noun is מְרֻגּוֹעַ, and the Chaldee paraphrase has נייח, which is the noun used in the Syriac version of Matt. xi 29.

[2] Sometimes, to avoid the awkwardness of saying 'soul' for 'self,' the original word is repeated, as in the phrase 'If Satan cast out Satan,' for 'If Satan cast out himself.' Compare also *οἶκος ἐπὶ οἶκον*, in Luke xi 17, for 'a house against itself.' It is even possible that this may give the clue to the strange saying, 'Let the dead bury their dead;' that is, perhaps, 'Let the dead bury themselves' (for it was hardly possible here to say 'their souls'), the meaning being, Let impossibilities happen, your duty is clear.

times; for the adjective derived from this root has the meaning of 'quiet' or 'meek' in disposition, and it is here represented by πραΰς in the Greek.[1] A new light falls on the familiar words when we read them thus: 'Come unto Me . . . and I will give you rest (*anīkh'kon*) . . . for I am meek (*nīkh*, "restful") and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest (*n'yākha*) for *yourselves*.' That we may serve Him 'with a quiet mind' is the gift of One who, above all others, was 'quiet and lowly in His heart.' So we seem to get back behind the Greek translation to the very words of the Aramaic dialect as they must have fallen from the Lord's own lips.[2]

10. In reviewing the whole passage as it stands

[1] The same root, differently vocalised, gives the proper name *Noah*: see Gen. v 29, 'He called his name Noah (נֹחַ), saying, This same shall comfort us'.

[2] Another instance in which we can recognise the Aramaic element which lies just beneath the surface of the Greek is found in a passage which, as we have seen, St Matthew brings into close juxtaposition with this (Matt. xi 17 = Luke vii 32). Our Lord is speaking of the inconsistency of the people in refusing John the Baptist as too austere, and Himself as wanting in rigour and strictness. What are they like? They are like pouting children on the village green, who will neither play at weddings nor at funerals: 'We piped unto you, and ye did not dance; we mourned, and ye did not lament.' When we read these words in the Syriac version, we see that, as so often in the old Hebrew prophets, the form of the thought has been determined by a *paronomasia* or play upon words. Between the word for 'dance' and the word for 'lament' there is but the difference of a single letter; in pronunciation there is but the change of the position of the vowels (*raccedton . . . arcedton*). Indeed, the difference is only between two voices of the same verb, which had come to be used in such divergent senses.

in St Matthew's Gospel (xi 25–30), we note that the first and second portions of it have two characteristics in common. One of these we have dwelt on at some length, namely, the Semitic idiom which underlies the Greek and helps to its interpretation. The other is the transcendent claim which is put forward by our Lord. He is 'the Son,' to whom 'the Father' has committed everything, who alone has knowledge of the Father, and can bestow that knowledge upon men. The tone of the tender saying which follows is not less majestical. No other teacher ever made such an offer as this: 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.' Not only does He claim to be able to satisfy the deepest needs of men; but with a supreme knowledge of our human nature He offers not the rest of inactivity, but the rest of a calm service, the harmony of life which comes from obedience to the heavenly Father's will. He Himself in a true human experience had 'learned obedience' and found rest, that He might say to others, 'Take My yoke and learn from Me, and find My rest for yourselves.' It is the divine love in human form that speaks to us here; the Son who knows the Father, and rejoices in the Father's will, and, standing as a man among men, commends the doing of it out of the fulness of His own experience as the secret of rest, the yoke that is easy and the burden that is light.

CHAPTER V

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE SYNOPTIC NARRATIVES AND ST JOHN'S GOSPEL

When we come fresh from the study of the synoptic Gospels and read again the opening chapter of the fourth Gospel, we are at once struck by the sense of a remarkable contrast. It will be well to endeavour to analyse this contrast and observe its more important elements.

The writer does not at the outset give us any suggestion that he is about to record the earthly life of Christ. He begins as the book of Genesis begins, 'In the beginning.' This similarity is no mere coincidence. For he too will speak of the creation of the world. The old Hebrew writer had told how God by an utterance, by His *fiat*, had created all things: 'God said, Let there be . . . and there was.' So the Hebrew Psalmists had understood and summed up the story of creation: 'He spake the word and they were made: He commanded and they were created;' 'By the word of the Lord were the

heavens made: . . . He spake and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.'[1] It is in striking harmony with this that our writer begins: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things through Him were made.' We feel this difference, indeed, that the Word of God is here presented as a Being standing in a relation to God and sharing the nature of God; and the lesson is emphatically repeated: 'the same was in the beginning with God.' So too the lesson of His activity in creation is repeated: 'and apart from Him was not anything made.'

But how remote do these theological statements appear from a Gospel narrative of the life of Christ, such as the three which we have hitherto been studying. We should expect that sentences like these would introduce a treatise like the Epistle to the Hebrews. Indeed we might more easily suppose that a Gospel narrative would follow the great prelude of that book: 'In many portions and in many methods in olden time God spake to our fathers in the prophets, and at the end of these days He hath spoken to us in a Son.'

[1] Psalm cxlviii 5; xxxiii 6, 9.

Here then at once is an element of contrast. The opening of the fourth Gospel leads us to expect a dogmatic treatise. It stands in sharp contrast with the openings we know already: 'The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ': 'Forasmuch as many have undertaken to draw up a narrative': or, again—and with how different an allusion to the book of Genesis—'*Biblos geneseōs*, The genealogy of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham.'

Our surprise is not lessened as we read on. Great abstract conceptions are presented in rapid succession: life, light, witness, flesh, glory, grace, truth. Each of these in turn is set in some relation to the Word who was in the beginning with God. For a moment, indeed, we seem to touch the solid earth, when in the sixth verse we read: 'There came a man, sent from God; his name was John.' But we get only a passing characterisation of him: 'he came for witness, to witness concerning the light . . . he was not the light, but to witness concerning the light.' And then we are taken back to the region of abstractions, which we had hardly left: 'that was the true light, which lighteth every man, coming into the world. He was in the world,

and the world through Him was made, and the world knew Him not.' What has this to do, we might ask, did we not know the sequel so familiarly—what has all this to do with the life of Jesus Christ?

And when we learn the answer to our question, our surprise rises yet higher. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . and the Word was made flesh.' 'He lodged in us, and we beheld His glory.' In all our study of the synoptic Gospels we have never met with language which even remotely approaches this. Yet as we hear it, and as we ponder again the facts we know in the light of it, we feel that we are being given the explanation of even the most amazing of those facts. Are we then to have an inspired comment on the contents of the earlier Gospels? So it might seem; for suddenly there reappears the name of John. He comes speaking words which are partially familiar: 'John witnesseth concerning Him, and hath cried saying—he it is that said it—He that cometh after me hath come to be in front of me; for He was before me.' But presently we are lifted again into the higher region—the highest of all: 'God hath no man

ever seen: One who is only-begotten and is God, He hath declared Him.'

Then, for a third time, and with equal suddenness, John is appealed to: 'This is the witness of John, when the Jews sent to him from Jerusalem priests and Levites to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not, and he confessed, I am not the Christ.' We are back on the earth indeed; but the scene is unfamiliar, and the voices are strange. We hear not a word of John's preaching of repentance, or even of his baptism. This is no comment on the facts we know: it is a new story altogether. And, what is most remarkable, it assumes that we know without being told who John is, and what he has done that it should be needful for him to 'confess and deny not, and confess, I am not the Christ.' As the narrative advances this assumption of previous knowledge is maintained. Though his baptism is not described, John is made to refer to it in words that we are familiar with, 'I baptize with *water*.' Twice this phrase of baptizing with water occurs, and we are left to supply for ourselves the contrast of another kind of baptism. So again, John's baptism of Jesus is not narrated; but John declares, 'I have

seen the Spirit descending as a dove from heaven, and it abode on Him'; and he adds that he had been divinely warned that He on whom the Spirit should so descend and abide, 'He it is who baptizeth with the Holy Spirit.' In these words a gap is filled, and the other baptism is incidentally explained. And then we have a statement which once more takes us beyond what we had known of John: 'I have borne witness that this is the Son of God.' When to this we add John's declaration, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world,' we feel that, whatever follows, we can hardly be surprised again.

Indeed, though the remainder of this chapter is entirely new, the most noteworthy features of its narrative have parallels and precedents in what has gone before. If one figure after another comes on the scene without an introduction, as though the names were perfectly familiar — Andrew, Simon, Philip, even the unknown Nathanael ('Philip findeth Nathanael') — this was the way in which John's name was suddenly presented to us. If a wholly new story of the beginnings of discipleship is offered us, this is not more startling than the wholly new story of

John's disclaimer of Messiahship. Even the most puzzling feature of all, the early recognitions and confident confessions, 'We have found the Messiah,' 'Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the king of Israel,' are less surprising than John's description of our Lord, which combined in a single phrase the symbolism of the Mosaic ritual and the prophetic vision of the sin-bearing servant of Jehovah—'the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.'

Here then is a fair sample of the difficulty which this Gospel from beginning to end presents to those who come to it fresh from the study of the synoptic narratives. The whole atmosphere seems different. Instead of a simple chronicle, which tells a plain tale and will not point its moral, we are lifted at once to the contemplation of eternal truths; and the narrative is entirely concerned with the illustration of these truths, with the progress of their proclamation, and with the gradual determination of men's attitude towards them. The end is seen from the beginning: 'His own received Him not.' Yet some 'received Him' and 'believed on His name.' For such as these this book is written. Its object is expressly declared at the close: that its readers, who are throughout assumed to be of those who have

received and have believed, 'may believe . . . and believing may have life in His name.' It is not altogether a new story: it is an old story newly told. At every point a familiar knowledge is presupposed, not only of its general drift, but of the chief persons who figure in it, and of many leading incidents, such as the Baptist's imprisonment and the institution of the Eucharist —incidents never related, yet vital to the narrative, which could not itself be understood unless they were known. It is a story retold after its inner meaning has been revealed: retold to proclaim that meaning. Out of a wealth of incidents the writer chooses those which serve to illustrate the truth he sees. It concerns him not at all whether they have been related before or no: some things he tells us which we already know in detail: others, and these form the majority both of incidents and of discourses, have only in the light of the fullest truth discovered their significance, and have only at last come to claim their place as necessary constituents of a complete record of the Gospel.

The chief elements of the contrast then appear to be these:—

(1) Instead of a plain narrative setting forth

facts or summarily recording discourses, and forbearing almost entirely from comment, we have a view of our Lord's life as it were from within, which puts it in relation to the whole history of human experience, and presents it as the manifestation to men of a divine Father through a divine Son, who has entered into humanity in order to lift men into fellowship with God. The life is itself a revelation: the story of the life is the drama of the progressive acceptance or rejection of the revelation.

(2) While the other Gospels offer a narrative intelligible to readers who may be quite unacquainted beforehand with the general story, the fourth Gospel assumes from the outset and to the close that those who read it will be familiar with the chief characters and incidents of the history, and will welcome the disclosure of its inner meaning. Accordingly the book contains much that is new and unexpected; while on the other hand much of what we already know disappears from sight. We are watching, so to speak, a new drama with the old characters and the well-known issue.

(3) Not only do the old characters appear in new situations—the scene, for example, being laid

mostly in Jerusalem instead of Galilee; but the utterances of all the speakers seem to bear another impress. There is on the one hand a tone of perpetual inquiry, and on the other hand a continual revelation of mysterious truths. There are long conversations in which our Lord expounds the meaning and issues of His mission, and His own relation to the Father who has sent Him. What men think of Him is seen to be the measure of their spiritual characters: each in turn who comes near to Him finds himself exposed to the light and judged. The great conceptions of the prologue, always excepting the one word *Logos*, recur as the leading terms of our Lord's own discourses—life and light and witness and truth and glory. At times it is not possible to say whether the Lord Himself is speaking, or whether the evangelist is commenting on what He has said. The style and diction of speaker and narrator are indistinguishable; and they are notably different from the manner in which Christ speaks in the synoptic Gospels.

This threefold contrast, then, meets us—theological interpretation, not bare narrative; typical scenes chosen for their spiritual significance, not

a complete and self-contained historical record; full discourses on transcendent themes, not groups of pregnant sayings, maxims, paradoxes. It is this contrast which makes us feel that we have entered another region altogether from that of the chroniclers of our Lord's deeds and words; a region of prophetic revelation, in which we are made to gaze upon the eternal realities which underlie the transitory shapes of human experience, and manifest themselves through signs and through speech in the life of the Word made flesh. And it is just this contrast, considered broadly and apart from particular anomalies and discrepancies of detail, which constitutes the real problem of the fourth Gospel. No Gospel comes to us with stronger external evidence of its acceptance by the Church. No Gospel offers literary tokens which point more clearly to composition by a particular author. No Gospel inspires the readers with a deeper sense of its spiritual truth: and yet in the case of no Gospel has controversy in modern times been so unceasing and so strenuous.

It is not right to isolate one of the elements of the contrast, and to speak as though the proclamation of the mysterious character of our

Lord's person were the real stumbling-block in the way of the reception of this Gospel. Its emphatic declaration of the divinity of Christ has doubtless whetted the edge of controversy, and has sometimes, it may be, determined the position of opponents or defenders. But there are many who are heartily devoted to that central truth, and yet cannot easily persuade themselves that the fourth Gospel offers them history quite in the sense that the other Gospels do, cannot think that Christ spoke exactly as He is here represented as speaking, and consequently cannot feel assured that this is the record of an eye-witness, or, in other words, the writing of the apostle St John.

I do not myself see how a controversy of this kind can be closed. The contrast of which we have spoken cannot be removed: it is heightened rather than diminished as we follow it into details. Every careful student of the Gospels is compelled to recognise it; and the time comes when he must put to himself afresh, as if it had never been asked before, the question, Can this Gospel, with its advanced Christology, its reconstructed story, its apparent transference of the matured thought of the

author to the lips of the speakers in his narrative—can it be brought into historical harmony with the other three? can it be a record written by one who moved among the scenes which the other three describe? can it be the work of an apostle narrating actual recollections? And such a student on a first impression will almost certainly incline towards a negative answer. For he will have grown up from childhood with a general picture in his mind of the life of Christ, composed without distinction from all the four Gospels together; he will unconsciously have read into the other Gospels much that is peculiar to St John; he will have gained, in fact, just that complete portraiture which through the fourfold Gospel the divine providence has designed to convey to the mind of the Church. Then he will have begun as a student to investigate the sources of his traditional knowledge; he will have discriminated between portion and portion of the evangelic narrative; he will have observed not only the distinctive differences, but the general harmony of tone and method in the separate elements and in the final composition of the synoptic narratives; he will have gained a new and captivating conception of the develop-

ment of the Gospel story—a conception resting fundamentally on the order of incidents in St Mark, and revealing a natural progress of the gradual self-manifestation of the Christ by deeds earlier than by words; he will have watched the growth of this narrative without serious disturbance of its original framework in the hands of two subsequent evangelists who had much to add, and who wrote with very different aims. And then at last, with this carefully defined conception in his mind, he will turn to the Gospel of St John. The contrast will the more impress him in proportion to the pains with which he has previously worked, and the success with which he has trained his imagination to exclude from view any elements external to the texts with which he has been dealing. He will find, if I mistake not, that he is faced by two alternatives: he must either deny the strictly historical character of the new details furnished by the fourth Gospel; or else he must bring himself to recognise that the completeness of the conception which has captivated him is an illusory completeness; that he has hitherto viewed from one standpoint only a life which now proves to be larger and more complex than he had supposed; that, in fact, this life had

revealed itself only to a mature reflection and a loving insight—to one who had not only seen and heard, but had pondered and recalled, until at last he was inspired to proclaim new elements of its fulness without seeking to harmonise them with the true but limited perceptions of an earlier time.

And this second alternative is not easy: to some it will seem impossible. For some minds are impressed by discrepancy, and are distrustful of the suggestion of underlying harmonies. They cannot acquiesce in insufficient explanations, and they cannot rest while serious difficulties are unexplained. They will cut the knot which they cannot untie. They will incline to reject the apostolic authorship of the fourth Gospel in the interest of the historical truth of the other three.

And still the fourth Gospel remains. Its internal evidence cries aloud that only an apostle could have written so: its external evidence is not weakened but strengthened by the discovery of new fragments from the earliest literature: and it makes its abiding appeal to the Christian consciousness as an inspired record of eternal truth which can brook no imputation of a falsified origin.

Let me sum up what I have ventured to say in large measure out of a personal experience, by quoting the words of one who will longest be remembered as the interpreter of St John to our age[1]:—

'The conception of the Lord which is brought to the study of any Gospel includes elements which are derived from all. Contrasts are already reconciled. So it was with the early Church. No teacher found the Fourth Gospel at variance with the other three, though they recognised its complementary character. Then follows in many cases an exaggerated estimate of the importance of the differences which are apprehended upon a careful comparison of the books. Fresh results impress us more in proportion as they are unexpected, and at variance with our preconceived opinions. Still later perhaps that comprehensive conception of the subject of the Gospel is regained by labour and thought, from which, as a tradition, the study began; and it is felt that a true and intelligible unity underlies external differences, which are now viewed in their proper position with regard to the records and to the subject.'

[1] Westcott, *The Gospel of St John*, p. lxxvii.

CHAPTER VI

CONSIDERATIONS BEARING ON THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL

I HAVE dwelt at some length upon the contrast between the Synoptists and St John, because I think it is well that we should recognise that the difficulty which it raises is one which inevitably meets the student who endeavours to bring the simplest principles of historical criticism to bear upon the narratives of our Lord's life. It is unjust to assume that those who question the authenticity of the Gospel according to St John are primarily impelled to do so by a theological prepossession. The truths of the pre-existence of Christ, of His relation to the Father, of His creative activity, of His incarnation, and of His glorified life, were committed to writing by St Paul some twenty years or more before the date of the fourth Gospel. They do not stand or fall with the acceptance or rejection of its Johannine authorship. It is accordingly quite possible to accept these truths on the testimony of St Paul,

supported by the continuous witness of the Christian Church, and yet to feel that the discrepancy between the synoptic narratives and the fourth Gospel is such as to place the apostolic authorship of the latter in serious doubt.

I propose in what follows to say something on each of the three elements of contrast which we have distinguished and have partially illustrated; but I shall speak first and in fullest detail upon the second of them, as it is the least complicated by dogmatic considerations and concerns chiefly the development of the history. I must, however, make one further remark of a general kind. We have spoken, in accordance with current usage, of the contrast between the Synoptists and St John. But it ought to be borne in mind that by the careful historian the synoptic narratives are not to be taken as a single whole, but must be analysed into their constituent parts. Thus, as we have seen, they contain two pictures of our Lord's ministry: one conveyed chiefly through His deeds, the Marcan picture of a Galilean ministry; the other conveyed chiefly through His spoken words, the non-Marcan picture in which there is little to guide us as to locality. The latter is of necessity more blurred than the

former, because it only survives in its embodiment in the composite works of the later evangelists; whereas for the former we have not only a similar embodiment in these works, but also the original document in its living freshness. Yet even so we can see that the two pictures had their characteristic differences; and it is with each of them in turn, and not with the two as blended in the first and third Gospels, that the contrast with the picture given us in the fourth Gospel ought to be made. Moreover, the literary critic will endeavour to form some conception of the general character of the additions made respectively by the authors of the first and third Gospels out of other sources which may have been at their command, and so gain further points of comparison. This is a task which still waits to be undertaken. The kind of help which may be derived from it will receive some illustration as we proceed.

The first point of detail which I would notice is the recognition and confession of the Messiahship. I think that it will hardly be questioned that from the time of His baptism at any rate our Lord's Messiahship was clearly present to His

own consciousness. 'Thou art My Son, the Beloved in whom I am well pleased,' was an utterance which naturally recalled the language of psalmist and prophet—'the king' set on the holy hill of Zion (Ps. ii 6, 7), and 'the servant' on whom Jehovah would put His Spirit (Isa. xlii 1 f., comp. Matt. xii 18). Yet St Mark, who is our ultimate authority for these words, depicts our Lord, not indeed as disclaiming the titles 'the holy one of God,' 'the Christ,' 'the Son of God' (all of which had the one signification of Messianic office), but yet as silencing the evil spirits who inopportunely proclaimed them. And when at the close of the Galilean ministry St Peter in answer to our Lord's direct question says, 'Thou art the Christ,' the disciples are charged to tell no man concerning Him. Not till He comes to Jerusalem in the last week does He by significant actions publicly present Himself as Messiah, accept the acclamations of the disciples and the multitude, and at the last, in response to the urgency of the high priest's question, 'Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?' openly answer 'I am,' and go forth to execution by the Roman authorities as claiming to be the king of the Jews.

Such is the view of the gradual development of the history which we bring with us as we approach the fourth Gospel. Here at the outset the Baptist speaks of Jesus as 'the Lamb of God' and as 'the Son of God'; Andrew says, 'We have found the Messiah'; Philip says, 'We have found Him of whom Moses in the law wrote, and the prophets'; Nathanael says, 'Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the king of Israel.' Soon after comes the significant act of the cleansing of the temple, with the significant words 'My Father's house': and presently to the woman of Samaria, who says, 'I know that Messias cometh,' He replies, 'I that speak unto thee am He.' No contrast can possibly be more startling than this; and we are constrained to ask, Can both these representations be historically true? or is one the simple and natural story of the facts, and the other the poetic creation of an ideal life of Christ?

Before we attempt to answer this question let us look at another even more obvious difference between the synoptic Gospels and St John. The whole record of our Lord's life as given by the Synoptists is very brief: so brief, indeed, that

to some of the early fathers it appeared that His ministry lasted only one year, 'the acceptable year of the Lord.' There is nothing in the first three Gospels which directly contradicts this view. The general scheme of St Mark's narrative is in the main accepted by the other two. St Matthew's displacements are chiefly due to the combination of scattered teachings into formal groups. St Luke's largest additions come together in a great mass at the close of the Galilean ministry and in connexion with the journey to Jerusalem: they do not demand any considerable extension of time limits.

This first scheme was exceedingly simple: a period of activity in Galilee, broken once or twice by northern journeyings: after that a journey to Jerusalem, a last week full of incident, and then the end. The impression is produced that Jerusalem was but once visited by our Lord, who went there to die. St Luke, indeed, in his introductory narratives tells of the presentation of Christ in the temple in infancy and of a brief visit in boyhood; but apart from this he too takes Him to Jerusalem only at the close.

When we turn to St John's Gospel we find that the limits of time are greatly extended. We have mention of three passovers instead of only one. We find the Lord successively in Galilee, where He turns the water into wine; in Jerusalem, cleansing the temple and conversing with Nicodemus; in Samaria, at Jacob's well; in Galilee again, healing the nobleman's son; in Jerusalem, healing the impotent man; in Galilee, feeding the five thousand; in Jerusalem at the close of the feast of tabernacles and then at the winter feast of the dedication: after this across the Jordan, and back at Bethany for the raising of Lazarus; then in the city of Ephraim near the desert, and back in Bethany and Jerusalem for the closing scenes. The impression produced is of a ministry centering in Jerusalem, with occasional visits to Galilee and elsewhere. Here again then we are met with a contrast which demands that we should either dismiss the fourth Gospel from serious historical consideration, or else largely remodel the general framework which we had constructed from the reading of the synoptic Gospels.

Now when we reflect upon the import of our Lord's mission, we begin to see that it is

exceedingly unlikely that He should have made no appeal to Jerusalem, the centre of the national religion, until the last week of His life. Whatever may be the cause of the limitation of St Mark's narrative, we cannot but welcome the intimation that it is extraordinarily incomplete. It is a Galilean story, and it breaks off with a promise that the risen Lord will reappear in Galilee. It is as Galilean as St Peter, whose speech bewrayed him. It revels in the enthusiasm of the Galilean crowds, and notes that the beginnings of disaffection are due to scribes and Pharisees who come down from Jerusalem. Its last story of healing is near Jericho: there is no miracle at Jerusalem, save only the significant withering of the fig-tree outside the doomed city: even the high priest's servant is not healed in St Mark. We are not here concerned with the reason of this limitation and this reticence: we only note the fact.

But this limited narrative formed the basis, as we have said, of the Gospels of St Luke and St Matthew. Their authors do not give us the impression that they were eye-witnesses, or writers who depended chiefly on the stories of eye-wit-

nesses. They depended primarily on documents. They accepted the clear scheme which they found in St Mark. They made indeed large additions, mainly of a didactic character, from another document which lay before them both. But they maintained the general outline which St Mark had furnished. Hence they too present in the main the Galilean picture. This is true even of St Luke, though his interest in Jerusalem is manifest and he places all the appearances after the resurrection, where St Mark fails him, in its immediate neighbourhood. The many incidents which he adds on the way to Jerusalem are without precise geographical or chronological indications.

Accordingly we have *one authority*, and not three, *for this limitation to Galilee*. Neither of the later evangelists appears to have been in a position to deal independently with questions of time and locality. St Mark has led the way, and they follow him. It is important, however, to observe that the other document which they both employed contained significant allusions to a wider activity. Even the Galilean ministry included notable incidents of which St Mark tells us nothing. For in the non-Marcan document

we find a woe pronounced on Chorazin and Bethsaida as among the cities in which 'mighty works were done' (Matt. xi 21, Luke x 13). And what is still more to our immediate purpose, the same document contained a suggestion of repeated visits to Jerusalem: for how else could our Lord have uttered the lament, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together . . . but ye would not' (Matt. xxiii 37, Luke xiii 34)?

Thus we find our *a priori* argument for a wider ministry than St Mark records, and an extension of the period with which his narrative seems to be satisfied, confirmed by the evidence of the non-Marcan document used by St Matthew and St Luke. We must widen the Marcan scheme: we must, it appears, find some place for visits to Jerusalem.

Having thus seen reason to enlarge our horizon and to demand a considerable extension of the framework of St Mark, we may return to the problem which was suggested by the early recognition of the Messiahship in the opening chapters of St John. We are now prepared to understand that a ministry in Judæa may have

been carried on simultaneously with the Galilean ministry to which our attention has hitherto been confined. Some sixty miles separated Capernaum from Jerusalem, and the crow would fly across the hostile territory of the Samaritans. Geographical position therefore, together with the consequent local difference of customs, dialect, and religious sentiment, would be enough to keep the two ministries distinct. Two methods might well be pursued among populations so severed and so diverse. And that the two methods could be concurrently worked out was rendered the easier by a peculiarity of Jewish religious life, which brought the more strictly pious worshipper once or twice or even thrice a year to the central sanctuary of Jerusalem. It is not therefore difficult to think of Jesus as the Galilean prophet who might be expected to reappear at regular intervals in the sacred city, carrying forward a mission there, intermittent yet steadily progressive, in the face of religious opponents who dominated Jerusalem as they could not dominate distant Galilee.

This is, I think, what we might reasonably expect. Our wonder, indeed, is that St Mark gives us no express statement that it was so.

But he is concerned with the development in Galilee; and it is enough for him to note how that was affected not by the occasional disappearances of Jesus at the festival seasons—a fact which might be taken for granted and was not essential to his story—but by the occasional appearances of scribes and Pharisees, 'who had come down,' as he says, 'from Jerusalem,' and who gradually succeeded in undermining the popularity which our Lord's beneficent ministry had won in the minds of the Galilean peasantry.

When, now, we turn to St John, we are struck by the fact that the whole scheme of his book is based on the recurrence of Jewish festivals. It is as we have supposed: Jesus is found in Jerusalem at the feasts. Nor is it any longer surprising to learn that a Judæan ministry is in progress, with its own peculiar development, marked by a speedier antagonism and by frequent discussion of our Lord's personal claims.

To the simple and ignorant folk of Galilee Jesus might appeal as the wonderful healer and teacher, as a great prophet, 'as one of the prophets,' and for a while as nothing more. He could endeavour to win men to trust Him for what they found Him to be, to listen to His

message of the heavenly Father's care, to come to Him for rest. It was different in Jerusalem, the centre of rabbinic influence, the home of religious controversy, the meeting-place of ecclesiastical politicians as well as of those earnest souls whom St Luke describes in the phrase 'all them that looked for the redemption of Jerusalem' (ii 38). In such an atmosphere 'Who art thou?' was a question which could not be postponed. To the emissaries of the Pharisees from Jerusalem John the Baptist might well find it necessary to affirm with vehemence, 'I am not the Christ.' Is it likely that Jesus would escape a similar scrutiny?

I leave this point of discussion with two further remarks.

(1) St Mark does not really justify our first impression that the disciples themselves were in ignorance of our Lord's Messiahship during the chief part of the Galilean ministry. The stress which seems to be laid on St Peter's confession near Cæsarea Philippi is not due to St Mark's narrative, but to the subsequent additions by St Matthew, whose grouping of incidents is not based on chronology, but on similarity of topics. We are quite free to believe that the

disciples knew of His claim to Messiahship, though they must have been perpetually puzzled by His refusal to assert it in ways that accorded with popular expectation.

(2) That St John should take a peculiar interest in Jerusalem, and especially in the feasts, is in harmony with some incidental notices regarding him. For we are told that he was known to the high priest, and had influence of a kind that gave him access that would have been denied to others. Moreover, he was in a position to provide a home for the Mother of the Lord; and that this would be in or near Jerusalem is made probable by the fact that he resided there for some time after Pentecost. Further, the lapse of years and the destruction of the sacred city would be likely to fix the attention of a later evangelist on Jerusalem, if he were a surviving disciple who was in a position to record what had happened there.

I have dealt only with two specimens of the historical contrast which meets us in St John's Gospel. I think it is important to deal with this kind of difficulty by itself, quite apart from the questions of the difference in the teaching

ascribed to our Lord in this Gospel, and of the view which its author takes of our Lord's mysterious personality. As we see how obvious and striking the historical contrast must always appear, however much it may be susceptible of explanation when we look beneath the surface, we are in a position to ask ourselves a question of considerable interest. Is it probable that a writer who made it his task, as some have supposed, to introduce a new conception of Christ, which was radically different from the Synoptists' conception of Him, would have ventured to commend his doctrine to the Church in a narrative which bore so few points of resemblance to the narratives which were already current? Would he not, on the contrary, have taken the utmost pains to preserve the familiar outlines, and to work his new conception in and out of the accepted scheme? As a fact, the writer of the new Gospel seems to be absolutely reckless of consequences, trusting wholly to the force of truth to commend his work to his readers. 'He has seen,' he declares; 'seen and borne witness;' and there are others to add, 'We know that his witness is true.'

If we could conceive of an isolated disciple, who

had long meditated on scenes of his youth, and at last in old age had gathered round him a band of eager learners who reverenced him as the one eye-witness left, the one man who still could say, 'I have seen, I have heard, I have handled the Christ;' if we could imagine their contrasting the wealth of his knowledge with the comparative scantiness of any written records, and demanding from him ere he passed away that he should tell the story as he knew it from first to last: then we should have conditions in which the construction of such a book as we possess would be not inconceivable.

The old disciple needs no documents, to compile as others might compile a laboured history. The whole is present in his memory, shaped by years of reflection, illuminated by the experience of a lifetime. He knows the Christ far better now than he knew Him in Galilee or Jerusalem half a century before. He knows who and what He is, as he hardly guessed then. And the fuller knowledge has revealed the inward significance of events as none knew it, save the Master, at the time. He cannot speak or write as if he were a young man wondering from day to day whether this were the Christ. He cannot even speak as

Peter may have spoken to Mark some thirty years before, when Jerusalem still stood and the end of an age had not come. He can no longer sever between the fact and the truth revealed by the fact: interpretation is blended with event. He knows that he has the mind of Christ. He will say what he now sees in the light of a life of discipleship.

What should we rightly expect in a record formed under conditions like these? Not history in the lower sense of a contemporary narrative of events as they appeared to the youthful onlooker: not an exact reproduction of the very words spoken by Christ or to Christ. And yet truth—the truth of history, the meaning of the whole story as the divine Spirit had revealed it to the writer, and as he had long grown accustomed to explain it to others. In detail we should expect much of the extraordinary fidelity of an old man's recollection of the incidents of early life. In particular, the characters of those who figured in his scenes would be unmistakably drawn. But conversations would be affected by the personality of their recorder; and the sequence of particular incidents might be sometimes past recall. We should look for a true

picture: we should not expect a photographic reproduction of the past.

To what extent does the history of St John's life offer the conditions which we have described above? He figures more prominently in the synoptic narratives than any other disciple except St Peter. He is mentioned alone in connexion with the rebuke of one who cast out devils in the name of Jesus, but was not a formal disciple. He and his brother James desired to call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans who would not receive their Master. He and James sought the first places in the kingdom, and declared themselves ready for any sacrifice. These two brothers, like Peter, received a special name from Christ, which is most naturally taken as denoting vehemence of disposition. Boanerges was understood to mean 'sons of thunder.' Peter and John are singled out for special service in the preparation for the Last Supper. St Luke names them constantly together in the opening chapters of the Acts: and it is in harmony with this that St Paul expressly mentions St John as one of the 'pillars' in the Church at Jerusalem.

Omitting the evidence of writings which have been attributed to St John's own hand, we pass

outside the limits of the New Testament. The prevailing tradition of the Church is that which is preserved by Irenæus, a disciple of Polycarp of Smyrna, who in turn had been acquainted with St John. It is to the effect that the apostle lived to a great age, and died at Ephesus in the closing years of the century. A single voice is raised in contradiction of this tradition. It is a supposed statement of Papias in his second book of Expositions, preserved in two late chroniclers, to the effect that 'John the Divine and James his brother were put to death by the Jews.' Papias himself of course could not have used the epithet 'the Divine' (ὁ θεολόγος). If he merely said 'John and James,' it is probable that he referred to the Baptist, and that a false identification with the apostle was made in later times. This is Dr Zahn's explanation. Lightfoot and Harnack offer a less simple solution, but agree in dismissing the notice as of no historical value. Irenæus and Eusebius knew the work of Papias, and yet maintained with no shadow of a doubt the universal tradition of St John's peaceful death in old age. It may further be noted that, whoever may be regarded as the author of the last chapter of the fourth Gospel, it is clear

that he believed that St John 'tarried' after the rest of the apostolic band had passed away.

We have then in the securest tradition of the apostle's later life just those conditions which appear to be suggested by the phenomena of the Gospel itself: an old man, disciplined by long labour and suffering, surrounded by devoted scholars, recording before he passes from them his final conception of the life of the Christ, as he looked back upon it in the light of fifty years of Christian experience.

To expect that after such an interval his memory would reproduce the past with the exactness of despatches written at the time, would be to postulate a miraculous interference with the ordinary laws which govern human memories. We have no ground for supposing that the divine inspiration, which we recognise nowhere more plainly than in this Gospel, should so far disturb the normal condition of the human instrument which it employed. Yet at the same time we shall do well to bear in mind that these are not merely an old man's recollections, such as we sometimes listen to, when he is recalling out of the past scenes

which have for many years been wholly unremembered. They are not memories which have lain dormant for half a century, to wake like the sleepers of Ephesus, unchanged as they fell asleep. They are living memories, never long absent from heart and mind: memories which in a sense have grown with the man's growth, and have ripened from the seed into the fruit. All that he has known of life has clustered round them, and helped to interpret them. They have been used again and again to illustrate the truths by which he has lived: they have become the vehicle of his constant exposition of these truths. Accordingly they are memories dominated by principles, and valued in proportion as they express those principles. The spiritual is seen to utter itself in terms of the material: the heavenly lesson is everywhere revealed in the earthly fact.

If, then, we would understand the narrative we must be familiarised with the conceptions which it is framed to set forth. Accordingly we begin to see the significance of the opening exposition of the eternal realities which underlie the external world and the history of man: and

we learn to value the abstract summary of the purpose of Christ's mission upon earth. The great ideas here presented are those which rule the narrative which follows. Here is the whole truth: the rest is illustration. This is the light in which he has come to see the Christ, and in which he desires that He should for ever be seen by others.

There are many difficulties of detail into which, in this rapid survey, it has been impossible to enter: of some of them I can offer no explanation that appears to me adequate. But I believe that in the general consideration of the apostle's position, as I have endeavoured to describe it, lies the ultimate justification of the Johannine authorship, and the true apprehension of the message of this Gospel. For a writer so trained and circumstanced the old standpoint is irrecoverably lost. The stages of transformation and transfiguration cannot be retraced. The growth has been so silent that there is no consciousnness of change. The Lord is from the beginning what He is at the end. The glory has shone out, and the whole of the past is illuminated by it. The Christ is no

longer 'known after the flesh': the old limitations once transcended cannot be reimposed. A glorious vision results. A drama is enacted in which every incident tells, or it would not be there. The record moves not on the lines of the ordinary succession of events so much as on a pathway of ideas: life is manifested under the symbols of water and of bread; truth under the symbol of light. Miracles are signs, and words are the instrument of judgment.

For all its contrast—its conflict, if you will—with the synoptic narratives, this Gospel gives a picture of the character and the claims of Christ which is in the completest harmony with what we have learned from them. Let me recall for a moment our discrimination of the synoptic sources, and the result to which it seemed to point in regard to the representation of Christ and His teaching. The Christ of St Mark was found to be the same as the Christ of the non-Marcan document, although the colours in which He is drawn are characteristically different. There is the same tender helpfulness, and the same flaming severity: the same humility of service, and the same unbounded claim.

We should indeed have a cause of anxiety if it

appeared, for example, that the unique title, 'the Son of Man,' proved on a discrimination of documents to have been absent from either of the fundamental sources of the synoptic history. But we find it in its fulness of meaning in both alike. We find it again, and in just the same use, in St John. And if St John for his part not only speaks of 'the Son of God' in the Messianic sense of the term, but also again and again declares the relation of 'the Son' to 'the Father,' using the terms absolutely as though there could never be a doubt of their meaning; this is a manner of expression which has a parallel both in St Mark and in the non-Marcan document. For in the one we have a single passage (Mark xiii 32) in which 'the Son' is spoken of as above the angels and in dependence upon 'the Father'; and in the other an equally isolated reference (Matt. xi 27, Luke x 22) to the knowledge of 'the Son' by 'the Father,' and of 'the Father' by 'the Son.'

The Christ is the same whether in the 'yesterday' of the Synoptists, or in the 'to-day' of St John. But the light of to-day is a higher light than that of yesterday. We would not willingly give up for any other form of narrative a Gospel

which reveals to us what the Christ grew to be in the mind of one who had leaned on His bosom in youth, had cherished a perpetual recollection of Him throughout long years of toil and suffering for His name, and at the close wrote as in his Master's very presence his testimony to what his Master had been and for ever should be—the Light and the Life of men.

NOTE D

On some Books of Reference and Methods of Study

The necessary materials for beginning a systematic study of the synoptic Gospels are few and easily obtained.

1. *The New Testament in Greek*, edited by Westcott and Hort. This is the most scientifically constructed text which we possess. It is well to reserve the question of various readings; but when the time comes to consider them, Tischendorf's New Testament (eighth edition) is indispensable, as giving the fullest *apparatus*.

2. *Synopsis of the Gospels in Greek*, by A. Wright. This is exceedingly valuable. It presents the parallel passages in a clear manner to the eye, and thus saves much labour.

3. *Concordance to the New Testament in Greek*, by Moulton and Geden. This Concordance is based on the text of Westcott and Hort, and accordingly supersedes Bruder's Concordance. For a few of the smaller words (prepositions, &c.), Bruder is still of use, as giving the passages in full where the new Concordance gives only the references to them.

The student will find it of great advantage to mark a copy of the Greek text as follows:—

(*a*) Underline in *red* ink all words and parts of words in St Matthew and St Luke which occur in the corresponding places in St Mark.

(*b*) Underline in *red* in St Mark all words and parts of words which occur in the corresponding places in either St Matthew or St Luke. It is not in practice worth while to distinguish between those which come in St Matthew only and those which come in St Luke only.

(*c*) Underline in *blue* ink all words and parts of words in St Matthew and St Luke which are common to these two Gospels in parallel passages which do *not* come from St Mark.

By means of (*a*) we see at a glance the modifications introduced into Marcan narratives by St Matthew and St Luke, and so by constant reading we familiarise ourselves with the methods they adopted in dealing with the document which lay before them.

By means of (*b*) we can observe what portions of St Mark's narrative were *not* embodied by either of the later evangelists. These form a very instructive study, enabling us to note his most striking peculiarities. We also learn how much we should have lost had his original work not been preserved. (Indeed, we could not have reconstructed it from St Matthew and St Luke, even in the roughest way, because we could not have distinguished at all between it and the lost non-Marcan document.)

By means of (*c*) we get a general idea of the

character and contents of the assumed non-Marcan document. An exact idea cannot of course be obtained of this document in this manner; for doubtless St Matthew has preserved portions of it which St Luke has omitted, and *vice versâ:* and in particular passages we are often left in doubt as to whether St Matthew or St Luke has preserved the original wording the more carefully. The portions underlined in *blue*, however, form the certain basis of any critical reconstruction of this document.

A further important preliminary is to write in the margin of each Gospel the references to the parallel passages in the other two.

For this preparatory work the *Synopsis* will be found exceedingly useful. But the underlining should not be done in the *Synopsis* itself, but in a copy of the Greek text of Westcott and Hort. The task is laborious; but every part of the process is full of instruction, and the result of this merely mechanical work is to throw a most valuable light upon the synoptic narratives.

There are two other books which I can confidently recommend to the student. One is Dr Swete's *Commentary on St Mark*, which should be constantly at hand. The other is the *Horæ Synopticæ* of Sir John Hawkins, which contains useful tables of words and phrases, and is both suggestive and trustworthy as a guide to detailed study.

For St John's Gospel Bishop Westcott's *Com-*

mentary is indispensable. The student who desires to see the negative view in regard to the authenticity of this Gospel ably stated should read Dr Schmiedel's article, *John the son of Zebedee*, in the *Encyclopædia Biblica*. I should recommend him then to read the lectures on St John's Gospel in Bishop Lightfoot's volume of *Biblical Essays*, and after that to study the introduction to Bishop Westcott's *Commentary*. If he will then turn again to Dr Schmiedel's article he will find himself better able to judge of the present position of the problem. For myself I may say that I find at present less difficulty on literary grounds in accepting than in rejecting the Johannine authorship. This I have probably made plain in what I have said above, although I have not attempted to do more than suggest some considerations as to the spirit and the method in which the problem should be approached.

THE END

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